

# Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare Consultation Report

Prepared for Bibb County Board of Commissioners  
Macon, Georgia

June 15, 2012 to August 14, 2012

Deborah L. Biggs, Consultant

October 10, 2012

Bibb County Board of Commissioners  
Samuel F. Hart, Sr., Chairman  
Steve Layson, Chief Administrative Officer  
P.O. Box 4708  
Macon, GA 31208-4708

The Bibb County Board of Commissioners and Chief Administrative Officer, Steve Layson, invited me to assist in the transition of operating the Animal Welfare Department from the City of Macon to the County. In addition to day-to-day operations, I was asked to provide an overall assessment of the department. Some of the specific concerns included lack of written policies and protocols, crowded housing conditions, infectious disease outbreaks, cleanliness and decreasing intake rates for dogs and cats at the shelter.

Prior to visiting the shelter facilities, the CAO's office provided me with numerous documents for review. Many of the documents, including all job descriptions, were updated and submitted prior to my on-site visit beginning June 25, 2012.

I thank Bibb County management and staff for welcoming me, allowing observation of all areas of animal care, and answering my never-ending questions.

The report contained herein is a detailed summary of the findings, recommendations and resources to help with implementation of recommended actions for most of the operations. I have not included the section on Field Services, as I wanted to get the most crucial information to you. The remaining chapter will be forwarded to you soon.

By its nature, the consultation process is designed to identify areas for improvement and suggest remedies. The report that follows should be taken in the spirit in which it is intended: a summary of my suggestions based on impressions collected during a brief snapshot in time. Each shelter is different, and practices that are successful at one shelter may not be at another. The recommendations in this report are based on positive experiences at other shelters, but may not be appropriate for Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare in every instance.

Overall, I found that the animal population at the facility exceeds the capacity for care, resulting in compromised health and welfare of every dog and cat in the shelter. This is evidenced by the number of parvovirus outbreaks in the past three (3) months.

Two months has passed and given the extent of the post evaluation communication and effort, I am encouraged by the desire of the Bibb County administration to develop Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare into a modern, if not model, program.

Many of the strategies in this summary and evaluation have been discussed with Bibb County management and to the best of my knowledge, these suggestions are being taken seriously and progress is being made on a daily basis. This is a process of ongoing procedural and cultural change that

will take time and resources. I am pleased with the response to date and will continue to assist Bibb County through this important process.

I commend the staff at Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare for their dedicated care of the animals and their genuine concern that every animal has a chance to live. While MBCAW has some tremendous resources, these resources would be amplified by the County taking the lead role in forging partnerships with other animal welfare organizations to pursue the shared goal of reducing euthanasia. A unified commitment to strategic, decisive, and collaborative action is required for successful movement toward reducing euthanasia in Bibb County.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like further explanation or assistance in designing and implementing protocols.

Sincerely,



Deborah L. Biggs  
Consultant

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## Population Management

### Overview

***Effective population management is the most important strategy for reducing transmission of infectious disease in shelters. This over-arching strategy affects the efficacy of all other strategies, including stress reduction, response to vaccination, segregated housing, cleaning and disinfection, prompt recognition of diseased animals, and space for isolation and quarantine.*** Crowding and the attendant stress is undoubtedly the single greatest risk factor for infectious disease outbreaks. Increased population density leads to a greater risk of disease introduction, higher contact rates for disease transmission, increased doses of infectious agents in the environment, and reduced ventilation and air quality.

Unfortunately, crowding in shelters is common, either due to insufficient facilities to provide even minimal care for the stray hold population, or to well-intended attempts to decrease euthanasia by housing more animals and holding them longer periods of time for potential adoption or transfer. Delays in moving animals through the facility are frequent precursors of disease outbreaks in crowded shelters. Crowding hampers effective cleaning and disinfection procedures, which increases the infectious dose of pathogens in the environment. There is no effective method to clean and disinfect dog runs if all are occupied. In addition, 100% occupancy does not provide an opportunity to have clean runs ready for new intakes.

The goal of population management is to limit the number of animals to the housing capacity of the facility. Housing capacity is defined as the number of housing units available for 1 dog/cat per run/cage. The daily census should not exceed the housing capacity. Ideally, the daily census should be less than the housing capacity so that empty runs are available to facilitate cleaning and disinfection, for predictable increases in population and for unpredictable increases in population (e.g., cruelty/hoarding seizures).

A former staff member, who at one time was the Interim Director, stated the number of animals that could be "legally housed" at the shelter was 80 dogs and 20 cats.

However, the Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Section, which licenses and inspects the shelter, stated during their inspection on July 10, 2012 that the limit is 80 ANIMALS total, not 80 dogs. Ms. Wendi Hilliard, Inspector, also reported to the Board of Commissioners the number had been set at 80 animals total in mid-2010.

In late 2011/early 2012 there was a paradigm and operational shift within the operation of the animal shelter. Under the City of Macon and the then-Interim Director, emphasis was placed on low/no kill of animals in the shelter. This resulted in the "conversion" of a typical animal control agency wherein public safety is the main objective to one more like a humane society where emphasis was placed on a huge reduction in the number of animals killed.

More will be written later in this report regarding this issue.

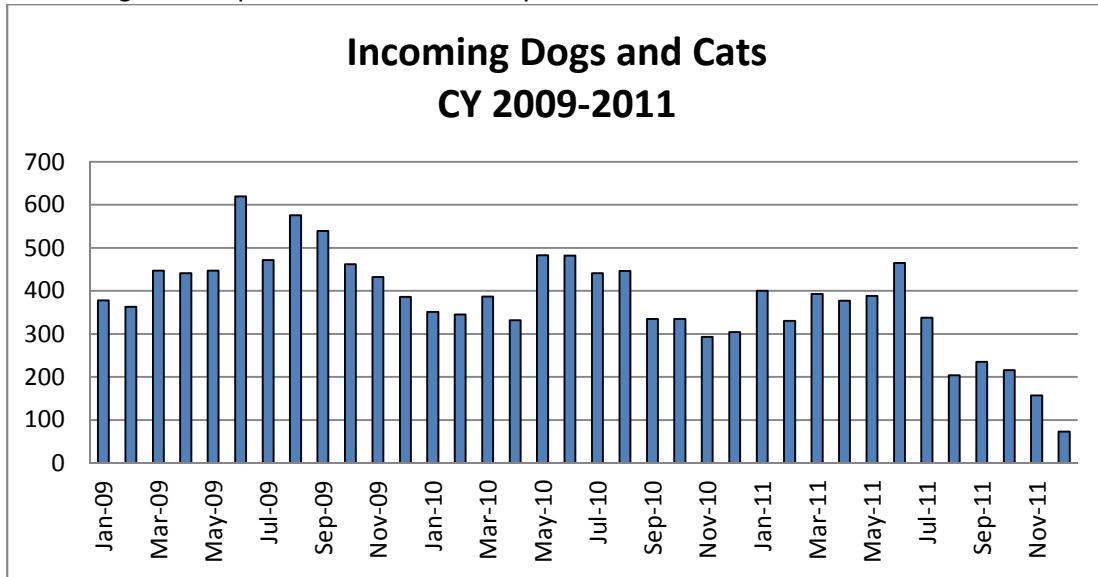
However, in order for Bibb County to understand the operational differences between the two philosophies, there are two (2) sections within Population Management: one dealing with facts and figures for the period on calendar years 2009 to 2011 and the other comparing January to June of 2009-2012.

## Historical Information CY 2009-2011

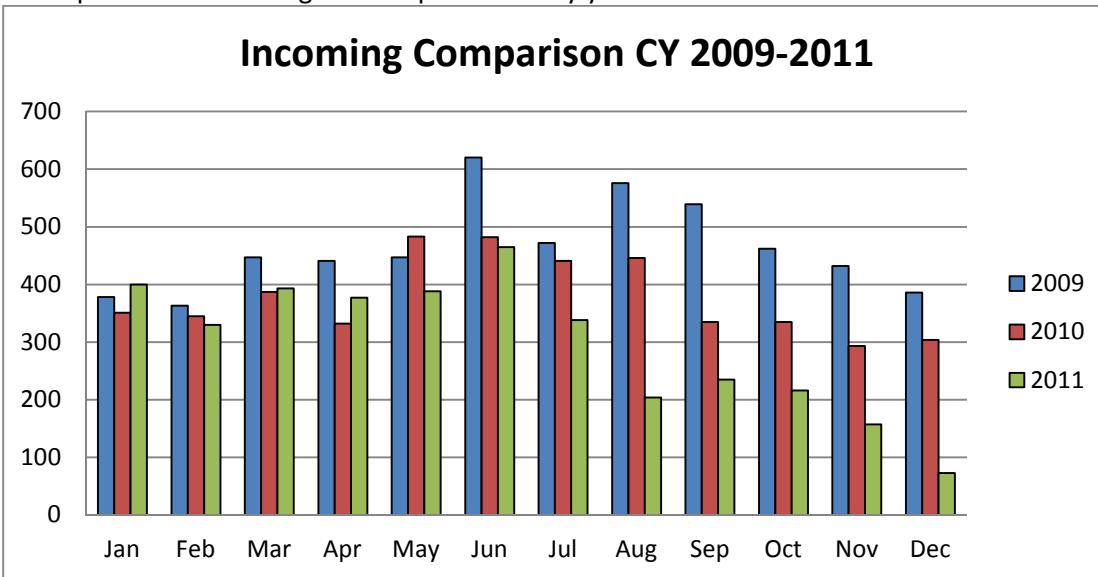
### Intake

Historically, the number of animals admitted to the shelter has fluctuated with an average intake per month of 464 in 2009 to 298 in 2011 with peak intake months of June through September each year (**Figures 1, 2 and 3**).

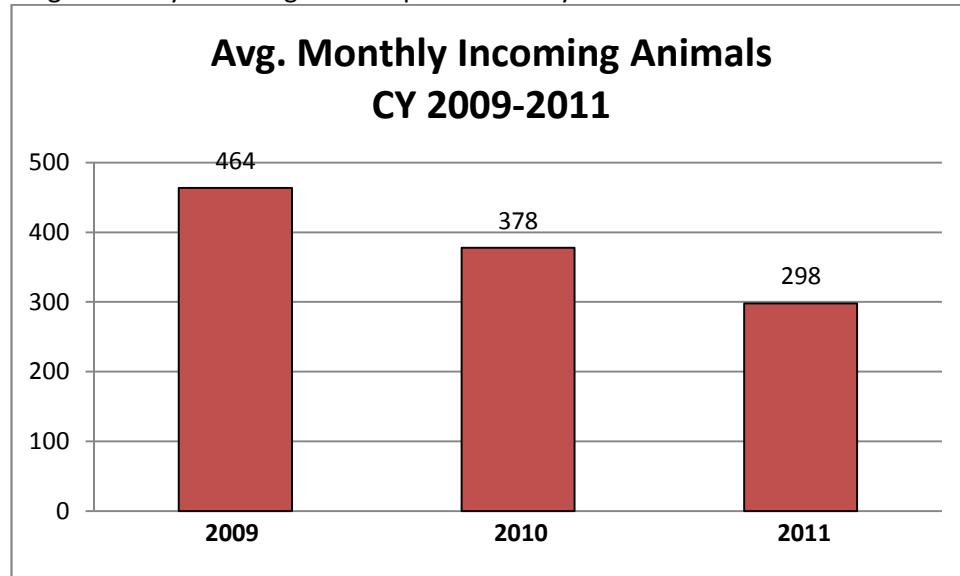
**Figure 1.** Incoming animals per month for calendar years 2009-2011.



**Figure 2.** Comparison of incoming animals per month by year.



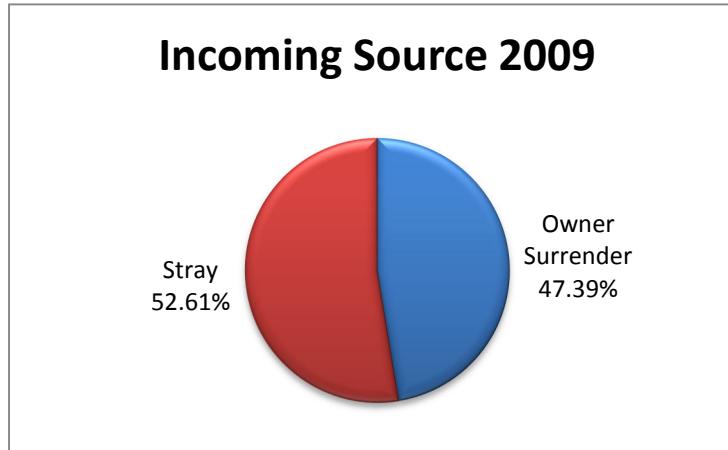
**Figure 3.** Average monthly incoming animals per calendar year 2009-2011.



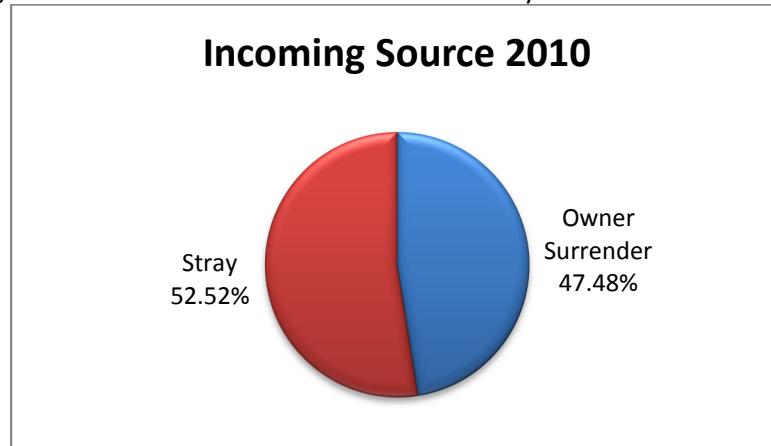
The two main sources of dogs and cats admitted are strays and owner surrendered animals. For the 3-year period of January 2009 to December 2011, the average monthly intake of stray animals was 208 (54% of total admissions); owner surrender animals were 180 (Figures 4, 5 and 6).

Traditionally, the number of owner surrendered animals at shelters was around 30%. However, with the hard economic times, that number is increasing. Fewer owner surrender animals were accepted by the shelter in 2011 under an Interim Director.

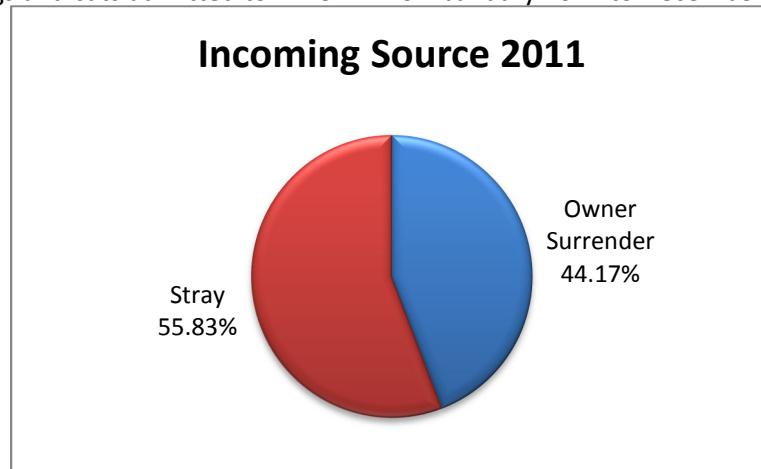
**Figure 4.** Source of dogs and cats admitted to MBCAW from January 2009 to December 2009.



**Figure 5.** Source of dogs and cats admitted to MBCAW from January 2010 to December 2010.



**Figure 6.** Source of dogs and cats admitted to MBCAW from January 2011 to December 2011.



**Conclusion:** Based on *historical data*, MBCAW can expect to house from 350 to 390 newly admitted dogs and cats each month, if operating as a true, full service animal control agency (i.e. "open admission"). More than half of these animals will be strays requiring housing for at least 7 calendar days based on the current ordinance. More than a third of new admissions each month will be owner surrendered dogs needing housing for at least a day according to current policy. The remainder of the new admissions includes animals that must be held for a legally required quarantine period: the housing period varies from 10 days for bite quarantine to months for some of the cruelty investigations.

## Live Release Rates (LRR)- Historical Information CY 2009-2011

To get the most accurate assessment of a community's progress, the Live Release Rate (LRR) is calculated based on all of the animals entering and leaving the sheltering system in the community.

The live release rate is a meaningful parameter to indicate a community's progress toward improving outcomes for its animals. Live release rate is the percent of animals that leave the sheltering system for a positive outcome, such as return to owner transfer to another agency or adoption.

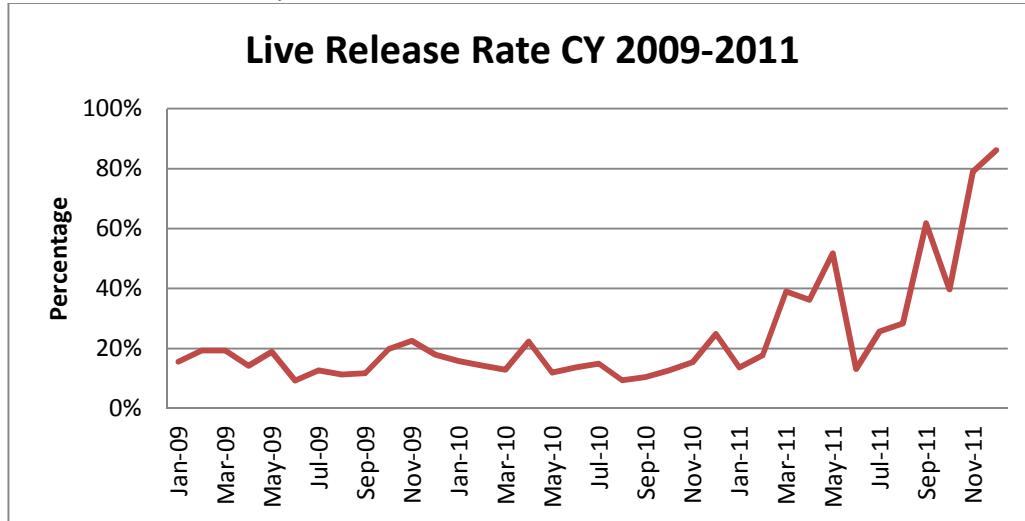
"Save rate" is often equated with live release rate; however, save rate indicates only the percentage of animals not euthanized. Save rate does not reflect the number of animals still held in the shelter or in foster care. Animals still in the sheltering system are highly at risk for euthanasia.

The Annual Live Release Rate formula, in accordance with the Asilomar Accords, is calculated by dividing total live outcomes (adoptions, outgoing transfers, and return to owner/guardian) by total outcomes (total live outcomes plus euthanasia not including owner/guardian requested euthanasia or died/lost in shelter/care).

*(Note: In August of 2004, a group of animal welfare industry leaders from across the nation convened at Asilomar in Pacific Grove, California, for the purpose of building bridges across varying philosophies, developing relationships and creating goals focused on significantly reducing the euthanasia of healthy and treatable companion animals in the United States. While it is highly recommended that staff embrace the philosophies of the Accord, it is not included in-depth in this report. See Resources.)*

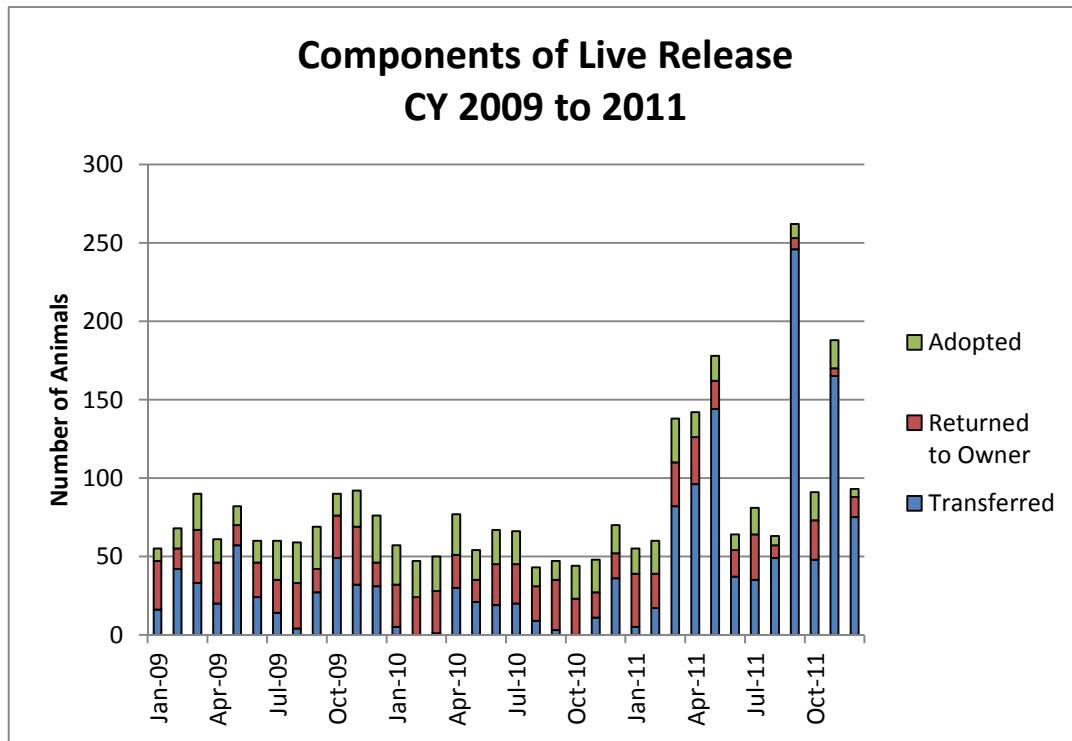
The monthly live release rate has fluctuated between a low of 9.26% in June 2009 to a high of 86.11% in December 2011 for a 3-year average of almost 21%. (Figure 7). However, the live release rate steadily increased in 2010 and 2011, to an all-time high of about 83% in November and December 2011. This increase in live release of animals was partly due to a "pardon" initiated by the then-Interim Director in November 2011 and people sponsoring to pay for adoptions in December 2011.

**Figure 7.** Live release rate January 2009 to December 2011.



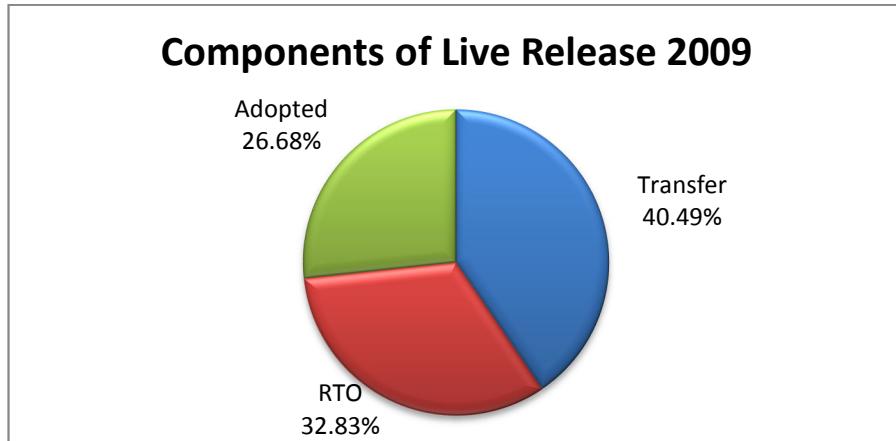
Transfer to other rescue groups for adoption was the major reason for release of animals in 2009 (40.49 % of total live releases) and 2011 (70.6% of total live release) (Figures 8-11). However, adoption decreased to 12.72 % in 2011. While adoption directly from the shelter has declined over the years, the transfer of animals to pet placement partners has steadily increased.

**Figure 8.** The number of animals released alive from MBCAW each month from January 2009 to December 2011. Outcomes for live release include adoption from the shelter, transfer of dogs to other groups for adoption, and return of dogs to owners (RTO).

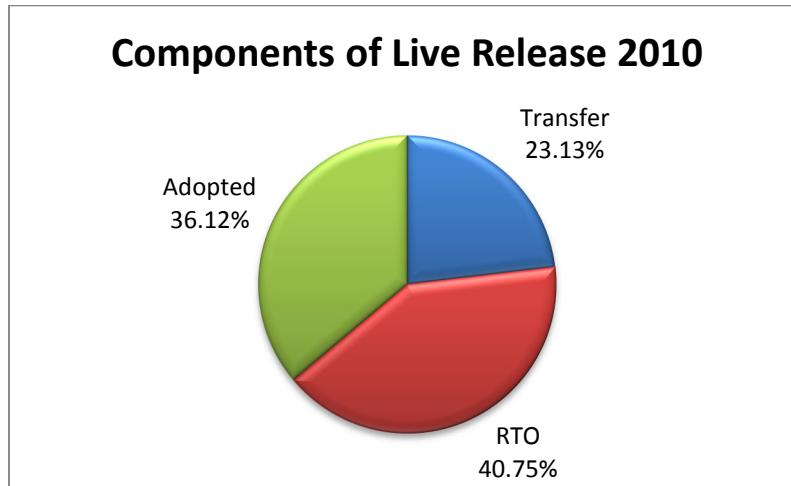


**Figures 9-11** depict the outcomes for animals released alive from MBCAW from January 2009 to December 2011. Outcomes for live release include adoption from the shelter, transfer to other groups for adoption, and return of animals to their owners (RTO). The outcomes are expressed as the percentage of all dogs and released for each year.

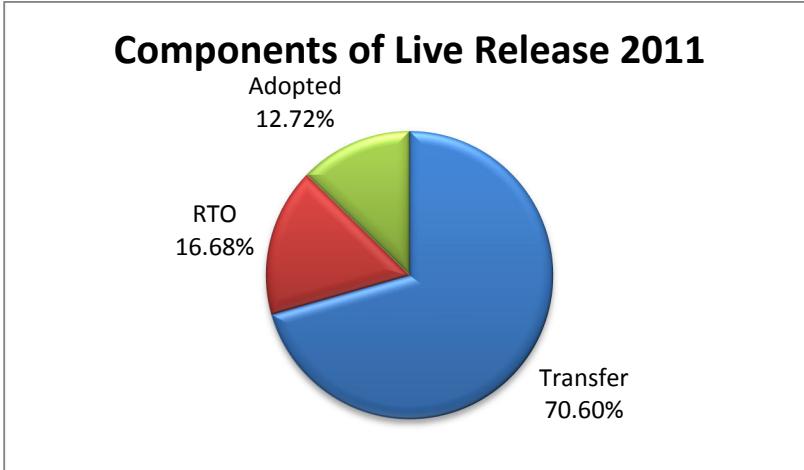
**Figure 9.** Outcomes for LRR 2009.



**Figure 10.** Outcomes for LRR 2010.



**Figure 11.** Outcomes for LRR 2011.



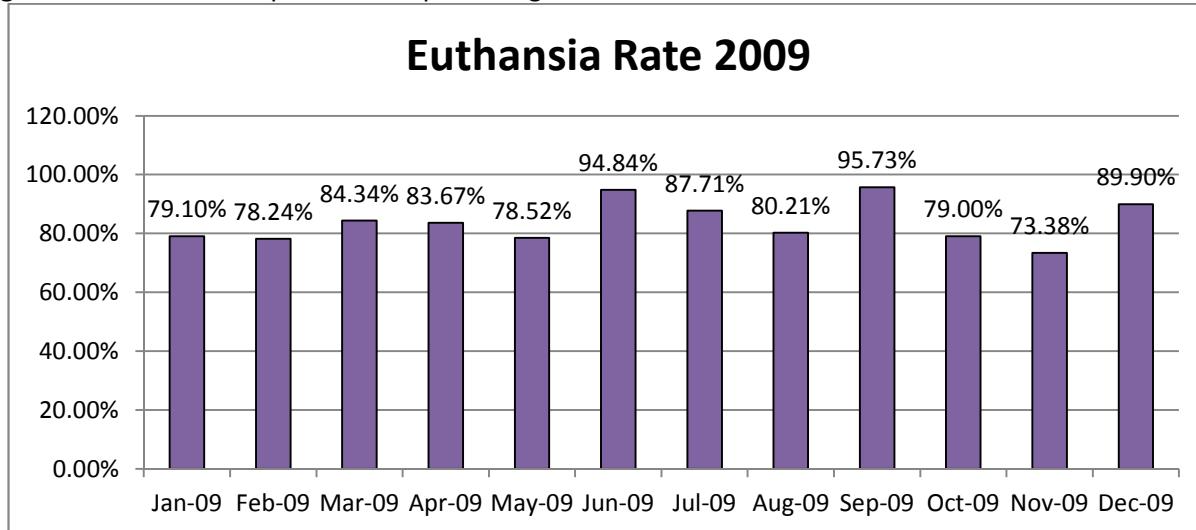
## Euthanasia-Historical Information CY 2009-2011

Animals euthanized at the shelter (excluding owner requests for euthanasia of their pets) can be expressed as a percentage of the intake per month or as the absolute numbers compared to numbers of animals admitted monthly. From 2009 to 2011, the monthly euthanasia rate has fluctuated between a low of 20.55 % in December 2011 to a high of 120 % in Sept 2010 with 3-year average around 81.3% (**Figures 12-14**).

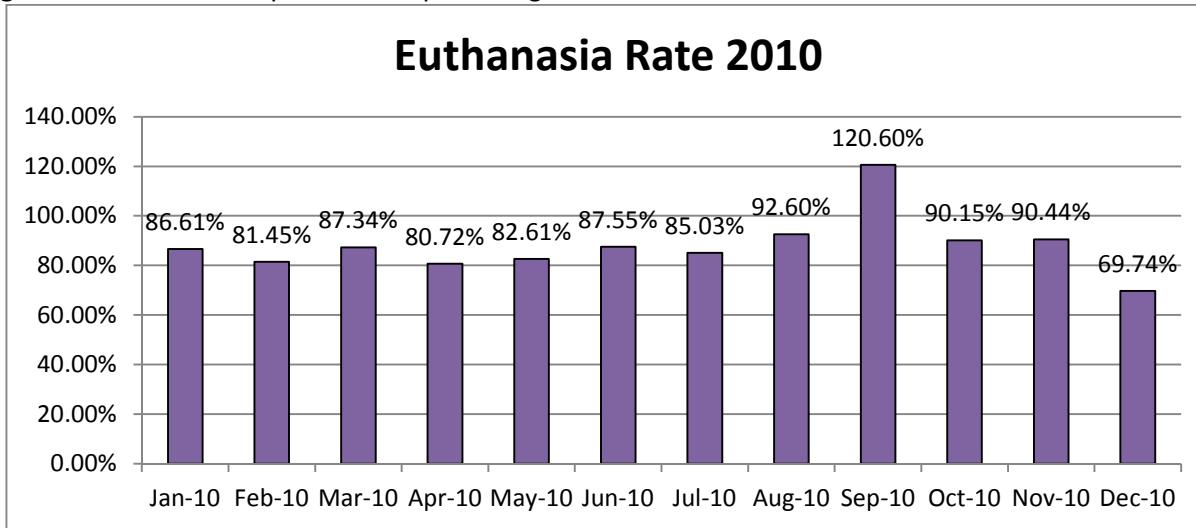
The euthanasia rate has steadily decreased since August 2011 under an Interim Director. This decrease in euthanasia in 2011 is also evident in **Figure 14**.

The average length of stay from admission to final outcome is extremely important in an animal shelter. However, with the Chameleon reports available at this time, the average length of stay for each month cannot be determined.

**Figure 12.** Euthanasia expressed as a percentage of the total animals admitted each month for CY 2009.

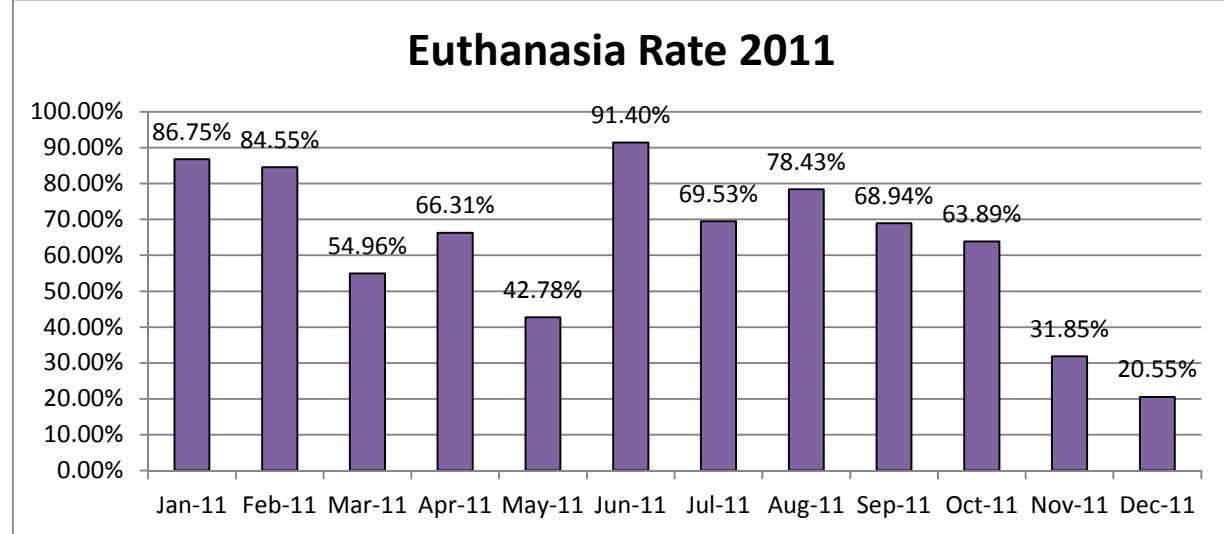


**Figure 13.** Euthanasia expressed as a percentage of the total animals admitted each month for CY 2010.



(Note: September 2010 indicates 120%. This is due to the number of animals in the shelter at the beginning of the month which are included in the total euthanasia numbers. )

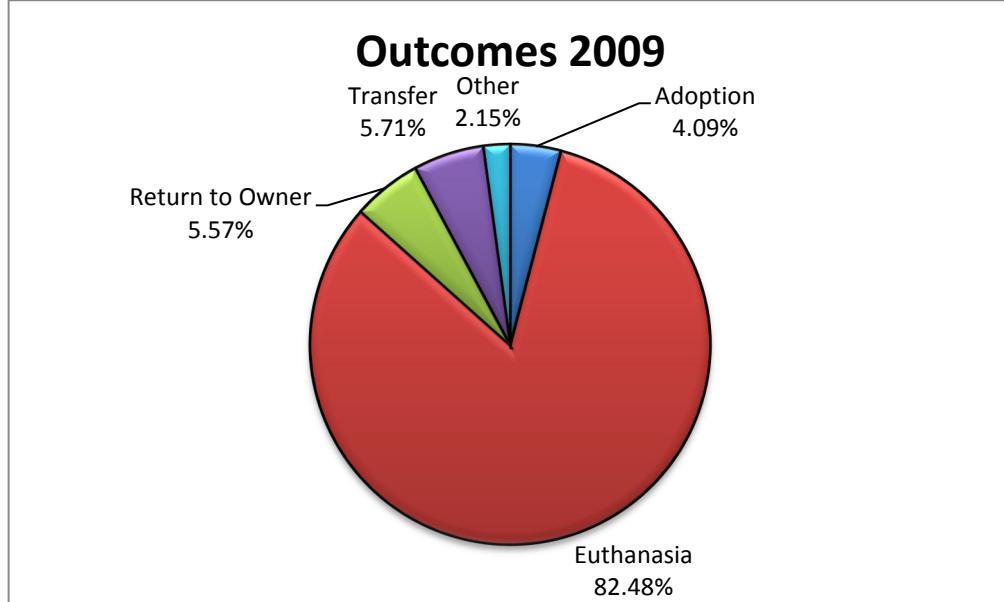
**Figure 14.** Euthanasia expressed as a percentage of the total animals admitted each month for CY 2011.



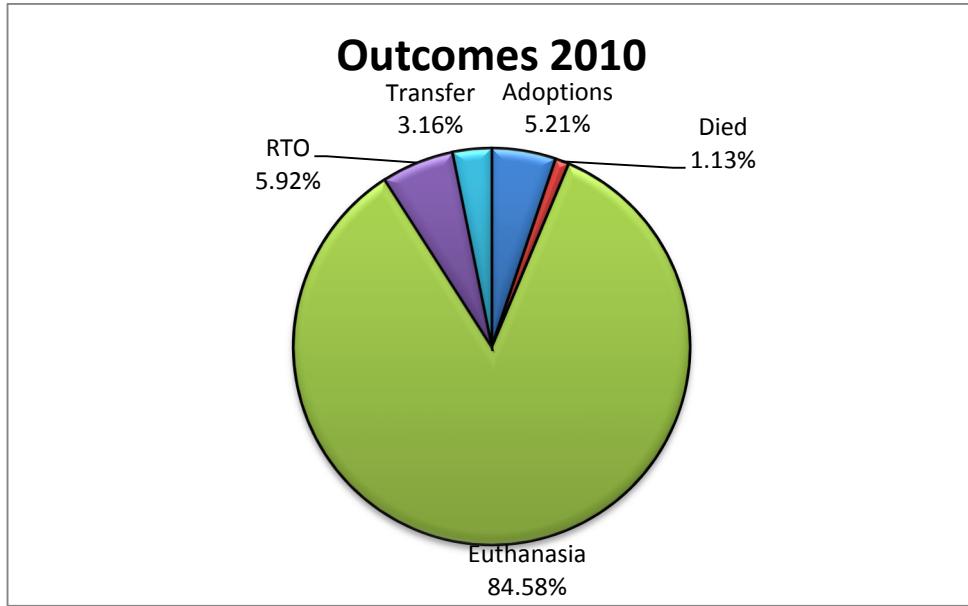
## All Outcomes 2009 to 2011

The charts below gives us a “the big picture” of all the outcomes, by percentage, for each year (**Figures 15-17**). In addition, **Figure 18** compares of the number of incoming animals and the LRR.

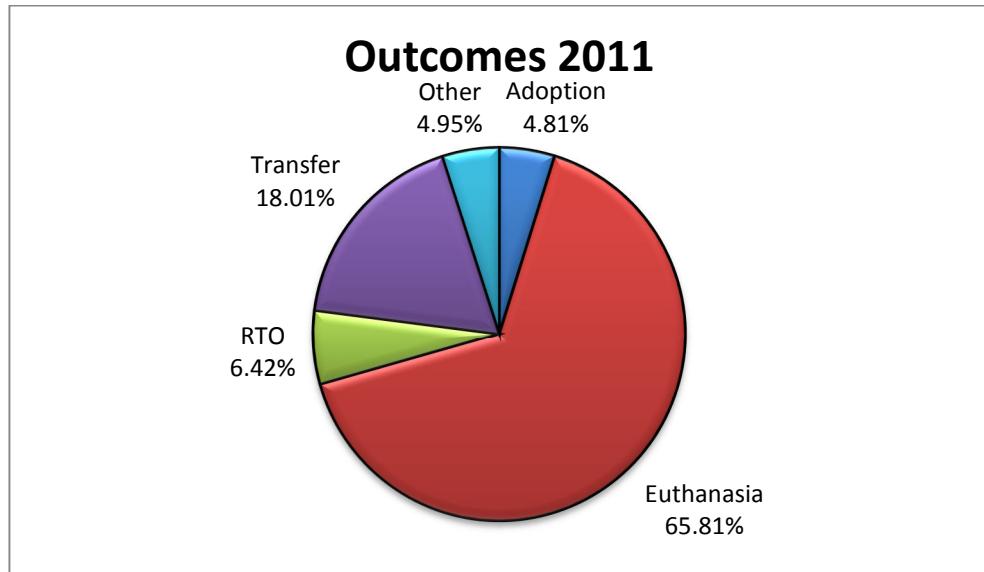
**Figure 15.** All outcomes for CY 2009.



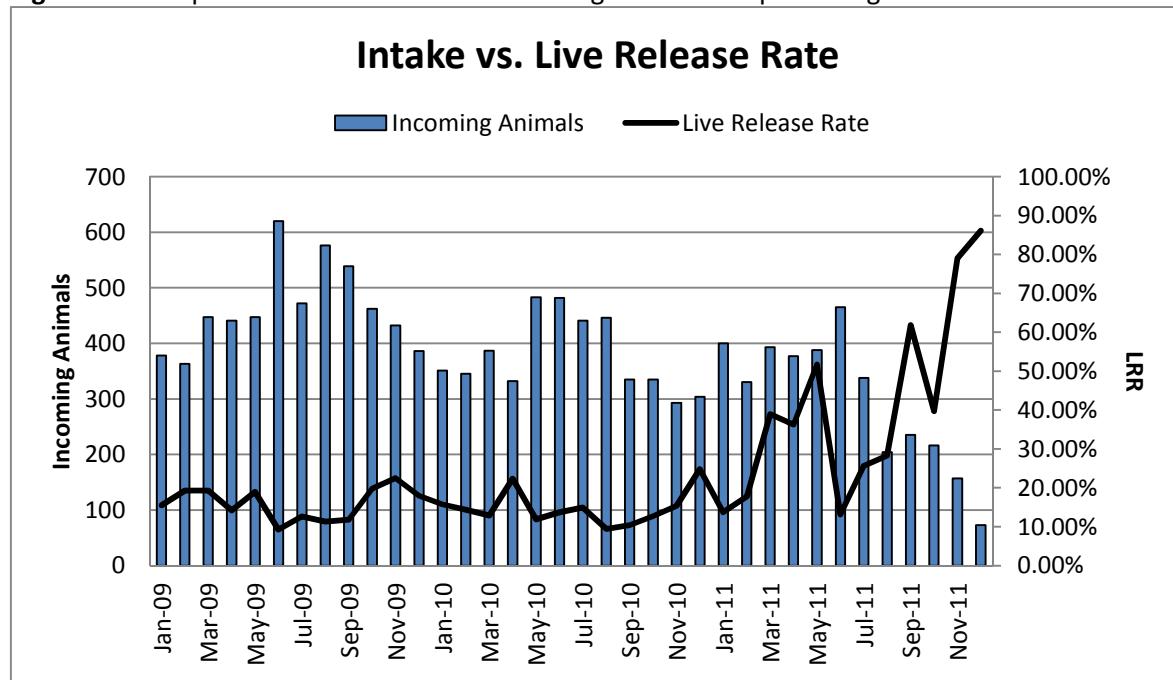
**Figure 16.** All outcomes for CY 2010.



**Figure 17.** All outcomes for CY 2011.



**Figure 18.** Comparison of the number of incoming animals and percentage released live CY 2009-2011.



### Paradigm Shift/Operational Changes 2012

In November, 2011, there was a significant paradigm and operational shift within the overall operation of the animal shelter. Under the City of Macon and an Interim Director, and orchestrated by a hand-full of local animal welfare individuals, emphasis was placed on low/no kill of animals in the shelter.

This resulted in the “conversion” of a typical animal control agency wherein public safety is the main objective to one more like a humane society where emphasis was placed on a huge reduction in the number of animals killed. Additionally, it also led to overcrowded conditions in the facility.

In order to adequately document the changes, several reports were needed to gather the proper information. However, several necessary reports do not exist in MBCAW's Chameleon program. Also, there is an absence of the report writing program, Seagate Crystal Reports. Therefore, much information needed to be calculated by hand using several individual records.

For that reason, the following section and analysis will compare only the first six (6) months of each calendar year for the period including 2012.

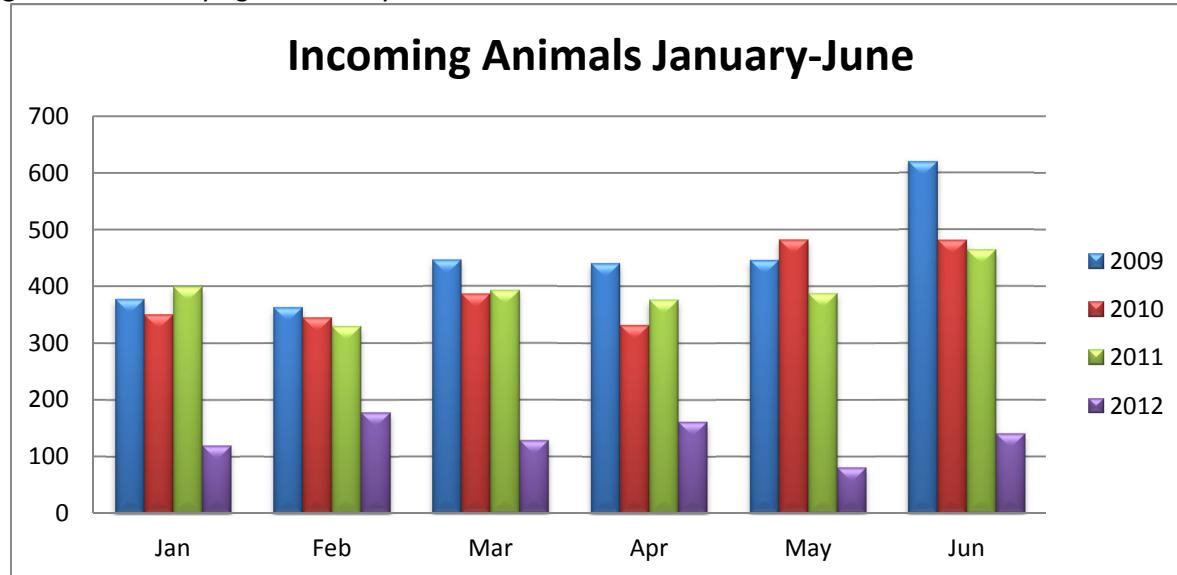
## Intake-January through June 2009-2012

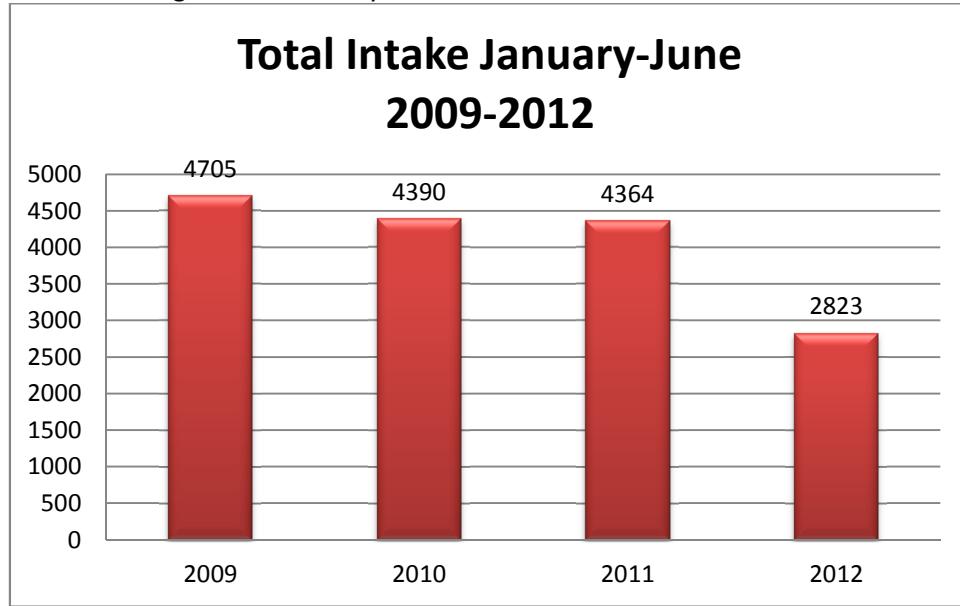
**Figures 19-21** below reflect the number of animals entering the shelter each month. While the numbers remained fairly consistent 2009-2011, the numbers decreased dramatically in 2012.

**Figure 19.** Incoming dogs and cats, by year, for January through June only.

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Jan	378	351	400	120
Feb	363	345	330	178
Mar	447	387	393	129
Apr	441	332	377	162
May	447	483	388	81
Jun	620	482	465	141
<b>Total</b>	<b>4705</b>	<b>4390</b>	<b>4364</b>	<b>2823</b>

**Figure 20.** Monthly figures visually.



**Figure 21.** Total incoming animals January-June.

The average number of incoming animals received at the shelter for 2009 through 2011 was 4,486. In comparing that average to 2012, there was a significant decrease of 37% in incoming animals in 2012 with no apparent reason for the decrease (e.g. aggressive spay/neuter program, public education programming, etc.).

Due to the philosophical change in operation, animals were held for longer periods of time in an effort to find them homes. As a result, the shelter was over capacity on a daily basis. Thus, there was no room to take in additional animals until space was available.

Another reason for the decrease in incoming numbers is that staff had been directed by a former employee to not document litters of puppies and kittens in case they were euthanized. If they were adopted or transferred to a rescue group, they were then input in the system. Typically, animals that went to the veterinarian for euthanasia without coming into the shelter (picked up by an ACO) were also not documented. In addition, the ACO's were directed by the same former employee to release the wild/feral cats caught in traps through the hole in the fence adjoining the landfill. These unprofessional actions were specifically done to skew the number of incoming and euthanized animals.

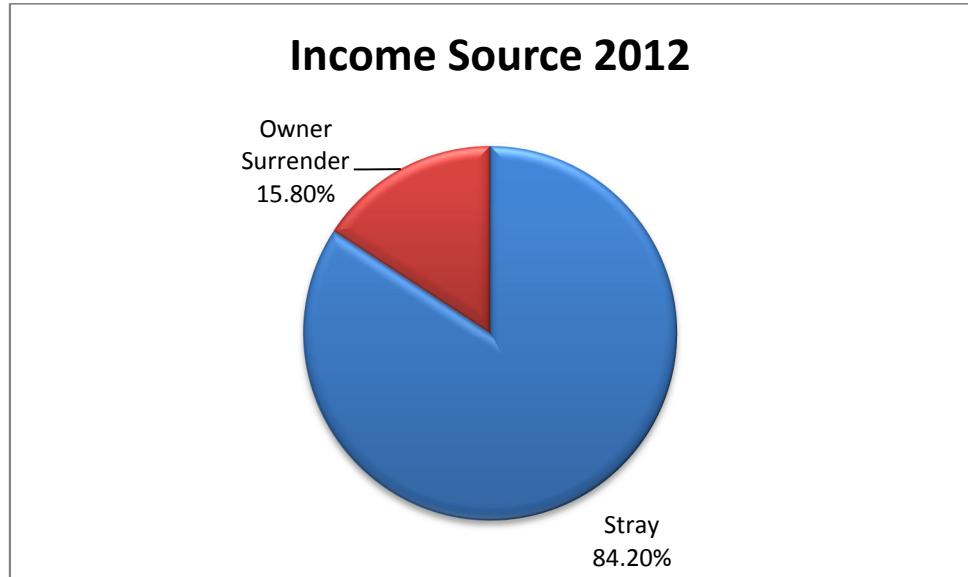
Finally, the overall decrease in incoming animals is due to the fact that the shelter is always full. We observed on a daily basis, residents turned away from dropping off (or ACO's picking up) animals because there was nowhere to house them.

#### **Incoming Source-2012**

While owner surrender animals accounted for an average of 49% of intakes for 2009-2011, that figure dropped to 15.8% in 2012. (**Figure 22.**)

2012	Cat	Dog	Total
Stray	140	558	698
Owner Surrender	39	92	131
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>829</b>

**Figure 22.**



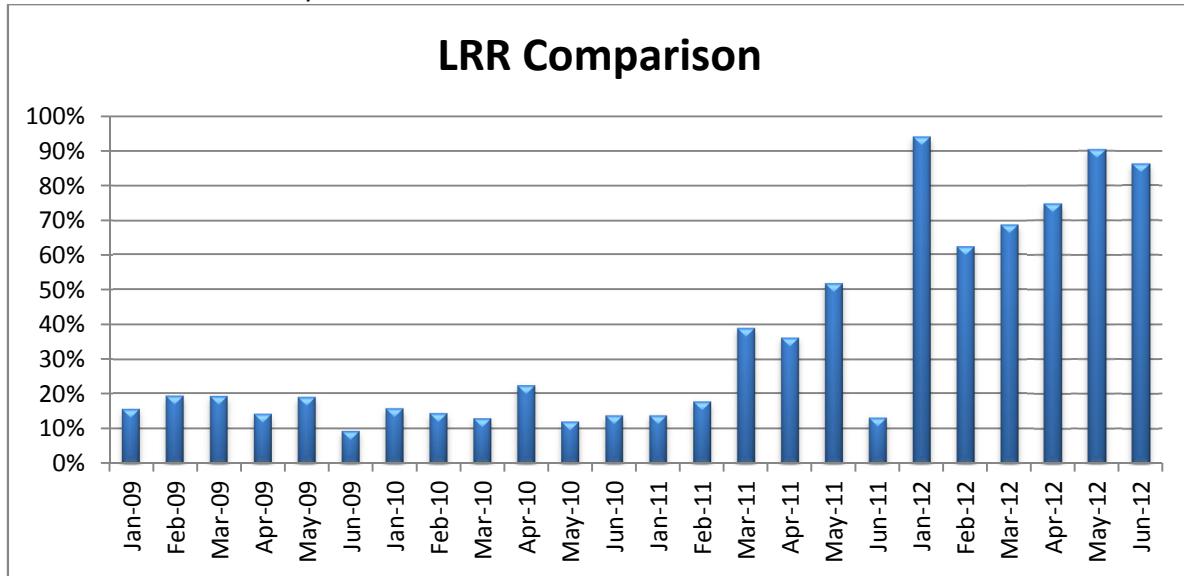
As part of the shift in operations, the shelter began to refuse accepting owner surrender animals. Those in charge felt that it was the owner's responsibility to take care of their own "problems", not the shelter, as it would "damage" their goal to be low/no kill.

Animals that were turned away frequently end up being dumped on the streets where they are left to fend for themselves. Some get hit by cars, others are exposed to infectious diseases and some starve to death.

The Humane Society of the United States "strongly advocates for an animal shelter in each community whose doors are open to all homeless and unwanted animals."

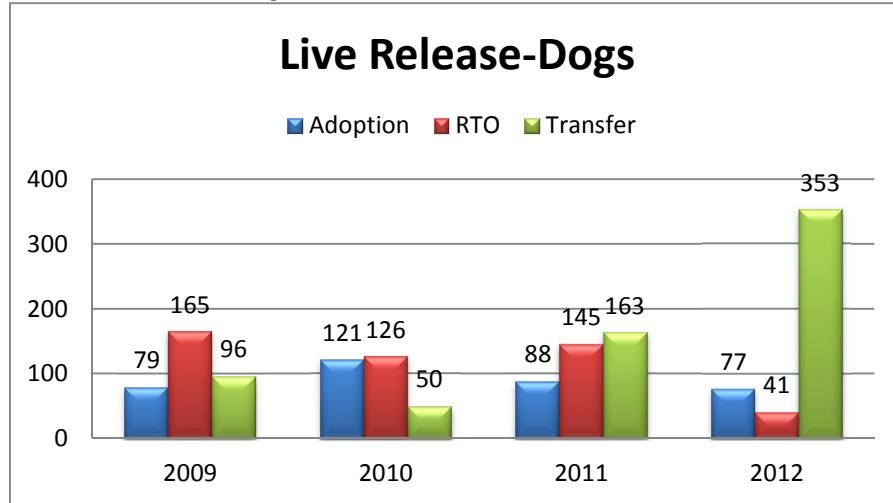
### **Live Release-January through June 2009-2012**

**Figure 23**, below, shows the rapid increase in the Live Release Rate percentage, comparing the first 6 months of each calendar year.

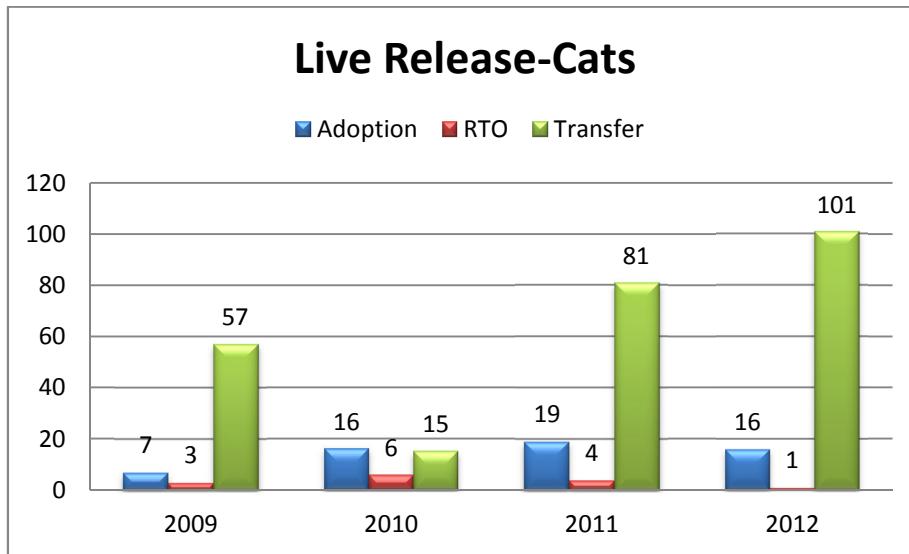


The following charts (**Figures 24-26**) depict the classifications of animals released alive from the shelter. The largest component of the live released animals were to rescues, not adoptions.

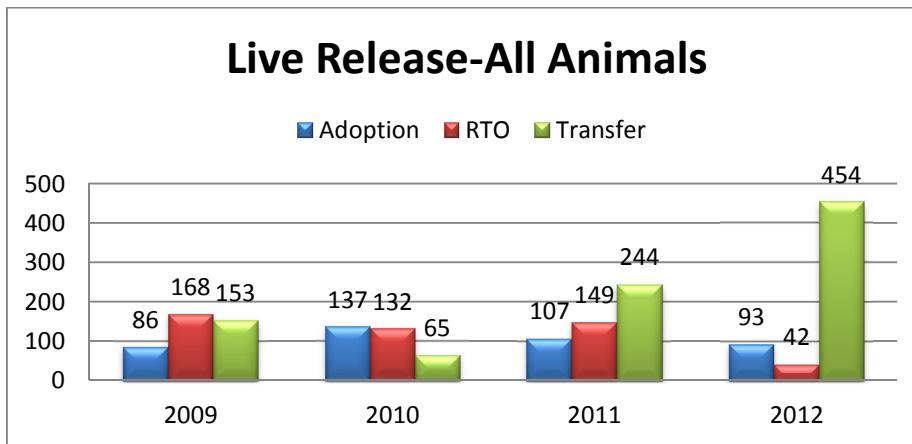
**Figure 24.** Live release numbers-dogs



**Figure 25.** Live release rates-cats



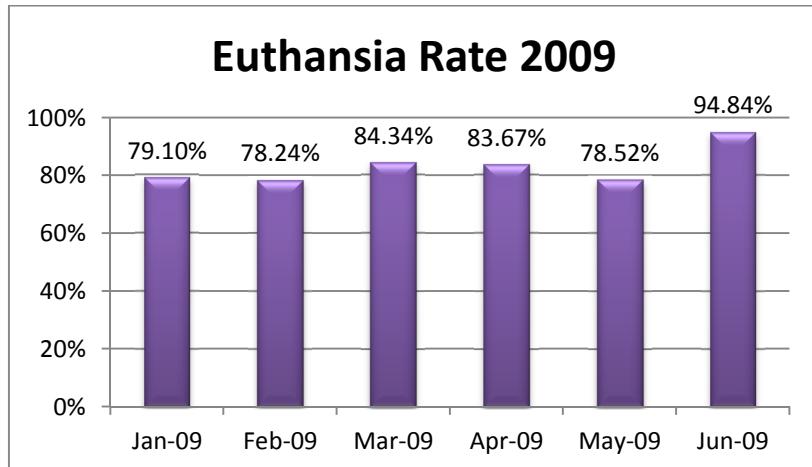
**Figure 26.** Live release all animals



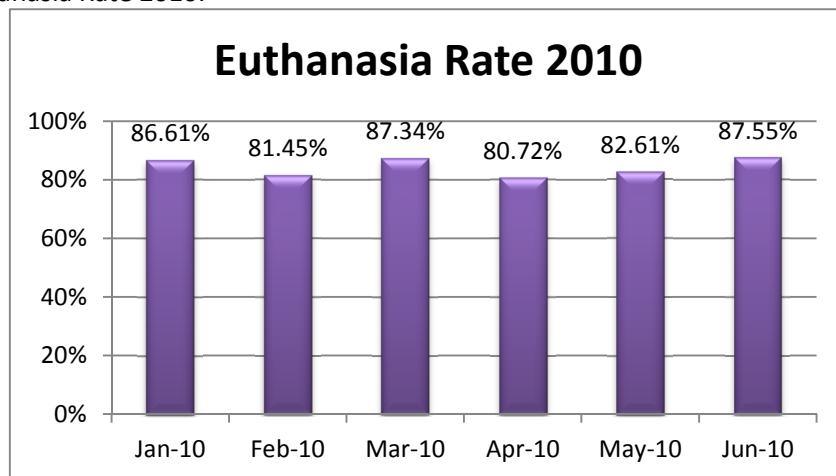
## Euthanasia-January through June 2009-2012

As noted earlier, the euthanasia rate remained relatively steady 2009-2011. However, one can clearly see the time frames in which the shelter was under an Interim Director. See **Figures 27-31**.

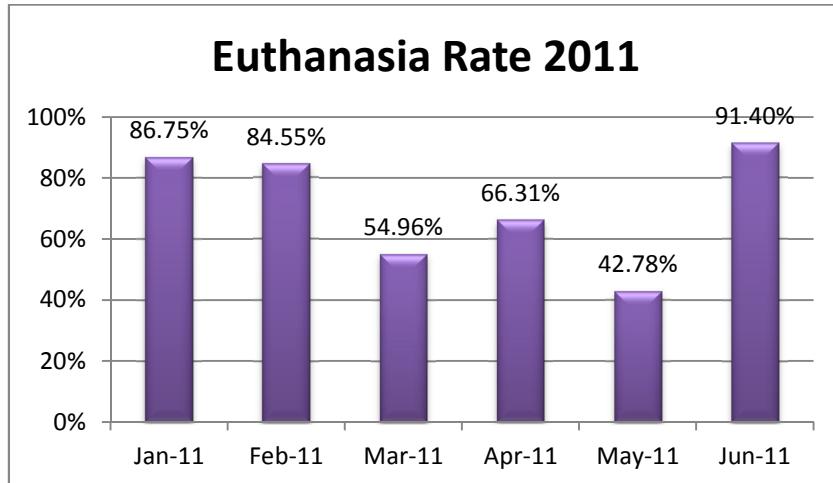
**Figure 27.** Euthanasia Rate 2009.

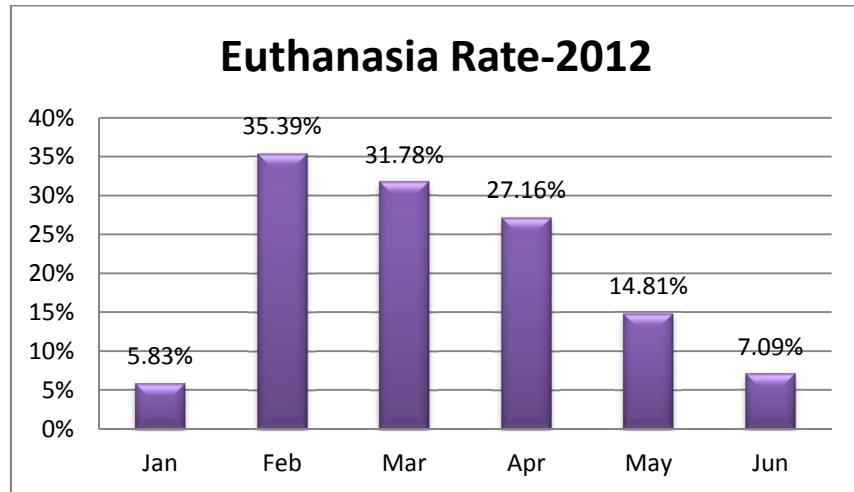
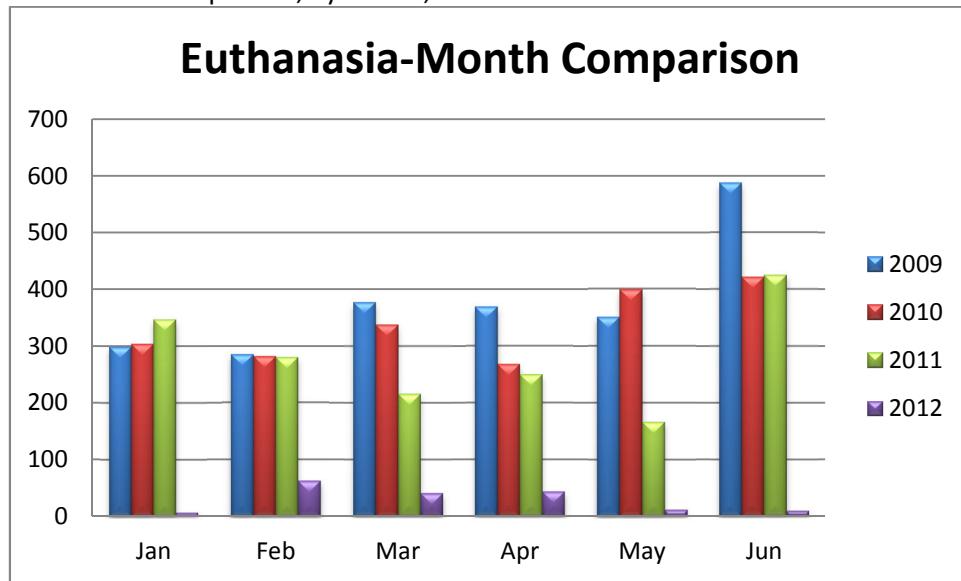


**Figure 28.**Euthanasia Rate 2010.



**Figure 29.** Euthanasia Rate 2011.



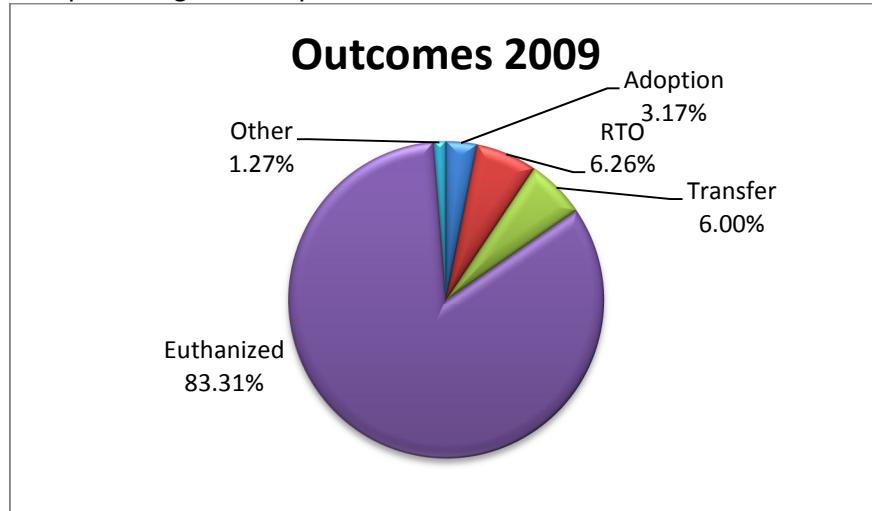
**Figure 30.** Euthanasia Rate 2012**Figure 31.** Euthanasia Comparison, by month, 2009-2012.

In 2012, the local animal welfare community boasted “10 weeks with no euthanasia” prior to July 5, 2012. When it was pointed out publicly that there were animals euthanized, the group changed their declaration to no “adoptable” animal euthanized. In addition, the shelter was forced to evacuate all animals so the building and grounds could be treated for pests and vermin. The PR surrounding this event led to the high live release rates in May and June 2012.

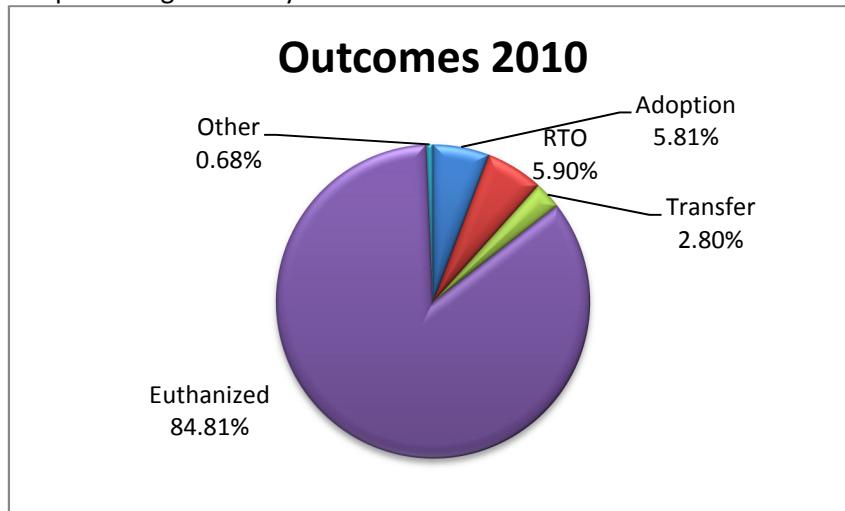
### All Outcomes-January through June 2009-2012

Perhaps nothing shows the dramatic progression of all outcomes than the charts (**Figures 32-35**) below. In 2009-2011, the euthanasia rate ranged between 71% and 84%. In 2012, that rate dropped to 21.7%. Likewise, the number of transfers increased substantially from 2011 to 2012, as well as the percentages of adoptions doubling.

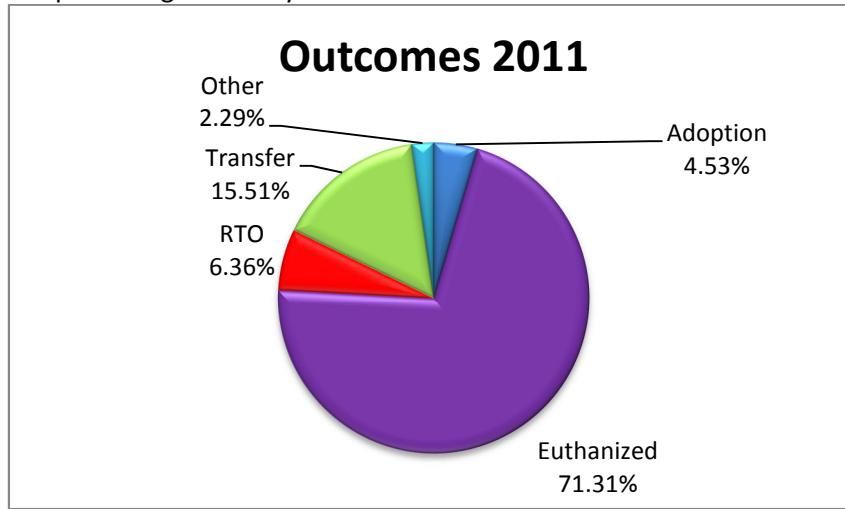
**Figure 32.** Outcome percentages January-June 2009.



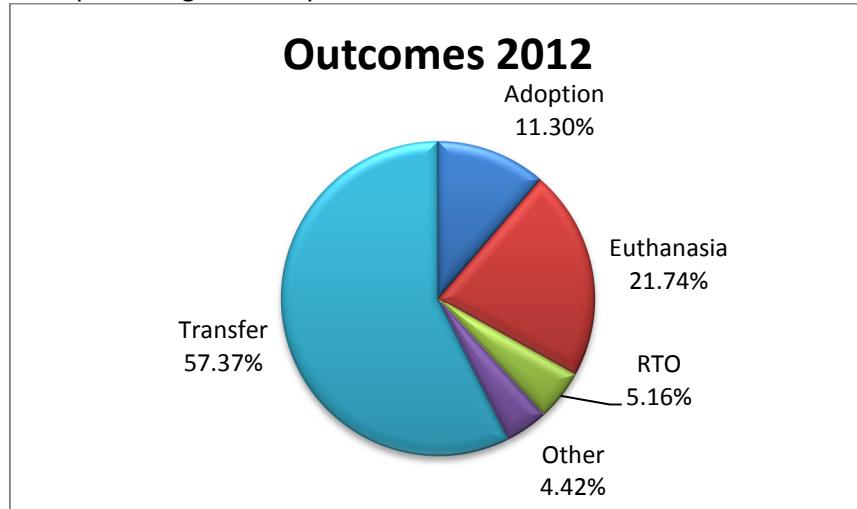
**Figure 33.** Outcome percentages January-June 2010.



**Figure 33.** Outcome percentages January-June 2011.



**Figure 33.** Outcome percentages January-June 2012.



## Housing capacity

The capacity at which animals can be humanely housed is extremely important in any shelter operation.

The main kennel at MBCAW contains 17 double-sided runs for housing dogs. These runs were designed to house only 1 dog in order to provide room for exercise and an area for elimination that is separate from that used for eating and sleeping. In addition, by using the center guillotine door, the dog could be enclosed in one half of the run while the other half is sanitized. However, the guillotine doors in the runs have been closed so that dogs could be housed in each half of the run, thus making the minimum dog capacity of 34 in the main kennel. The Adoption room has 5 smaller runs, adding a capacity of 5 dogs. The Quarantine area has a capacity of 3 dogs.

Excluding the stainless steel cages, the capacity for housing in runs is therefore 42.

When we arrived at the shelter in June, a quick evaluation was conducted on the housing areas. Based on our observations, we stated the capacity for dogs should be no more than 55-60. A former employee stated that the contract veterinarian had also recommended that number but that the state allowed 80 dogs.

However, the Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Section, which licenses and inspects the shelter, stated during their inspection on July 10, 2012 that the limit is 80 ANIMALS total, not 80 dogs. Ms. Wendi Hilliard, Inspector, also reported to the Board of Commissioners the number had been set at 80 animals total in mid-2010.

## Average Length of Stay

Unfortunately, there is no report within Chameleon to capture the “daily animal inventory” or the “average length of stay” for a given period of time. In addition, the City of Macon did not purchase Seagate Crystal Reports, the report writing component that works with Chameleon.

Therefore, we were unable to determine how many dogs or cats were in the kennel on any given day, other than the “current daily inventory.”

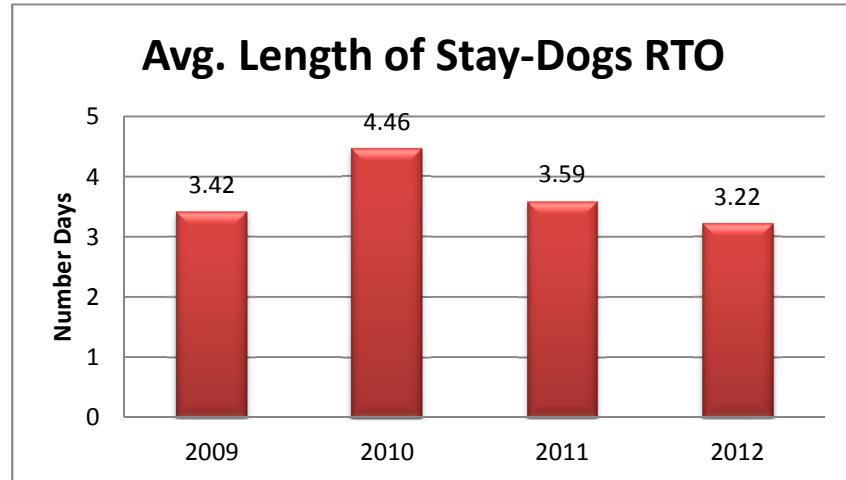
We were, however, able run a report for the outgoing animal details that captured the incoming and outgoing dates for all returned to owner, adopted and transferred animals. From this report, we hand calculated the length of stay for the first six (6) months of each calendar year from 2009-2012.

In 2012, the number of dogs and cats housed in the shelter frequently exceeded the capacity provided by the state. This may be partly explained by the decrease in intake, but most likely was due to an increased length of stay for each dog and cat. In the face of continued daily intake, the length of stay greatly affects the number of dogs in the shelter. Housing dogs for more than 7 days drives the population beyond the housing capacity, forcing the housing of at least 2 dogs per run and holding of small dogs and puppies in stainless steel cages that are too small for housing.

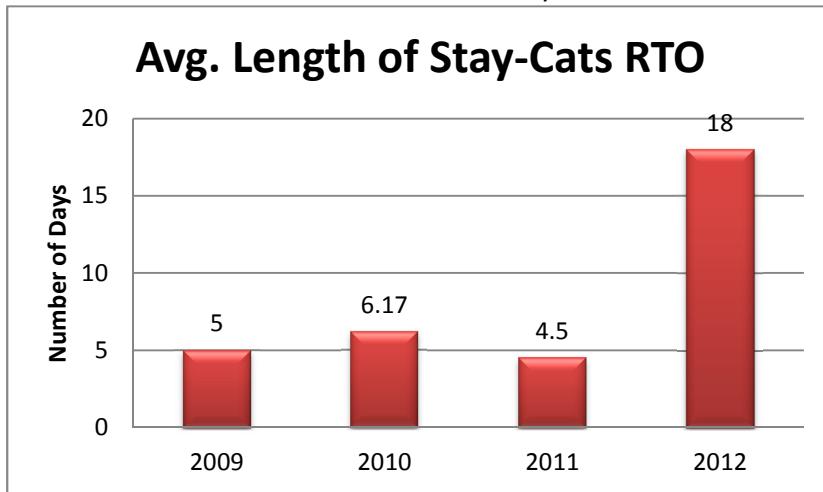
The end result is crowding. This is the situation observed by the consultants during the site visit when most of the dogs had been in the shelter for more than 3 weeks and at least a third had been there for more than 4 weeks. The following graphs depict the average length of stay for all live release outcomes.

#### **Return to Owners (RTO)**

The length of stay for dogs returned to their owners from January to June for 2009 to 2012. The average is typical in most shelters.



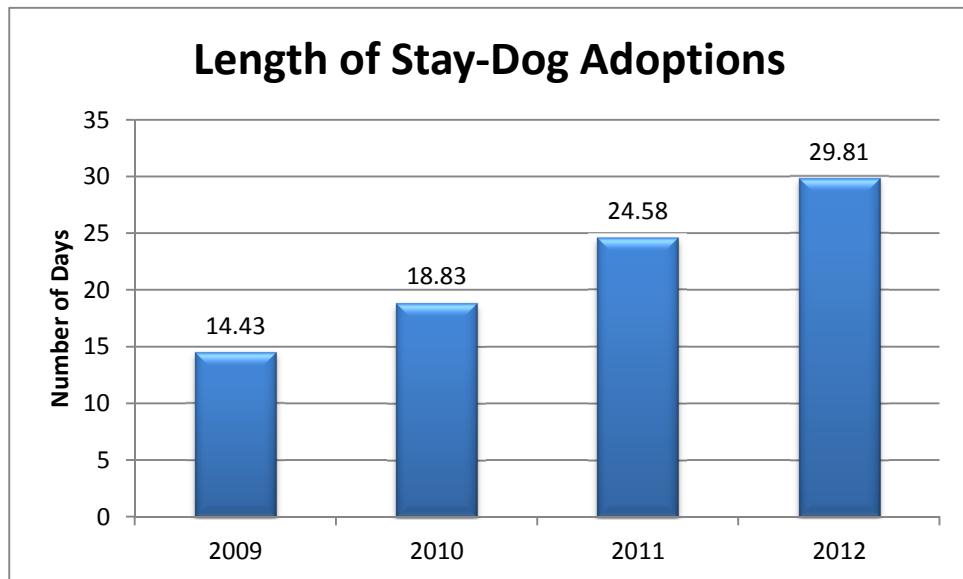
The length of stay for cats returned to their owners from January to June for 2009 to 2012:



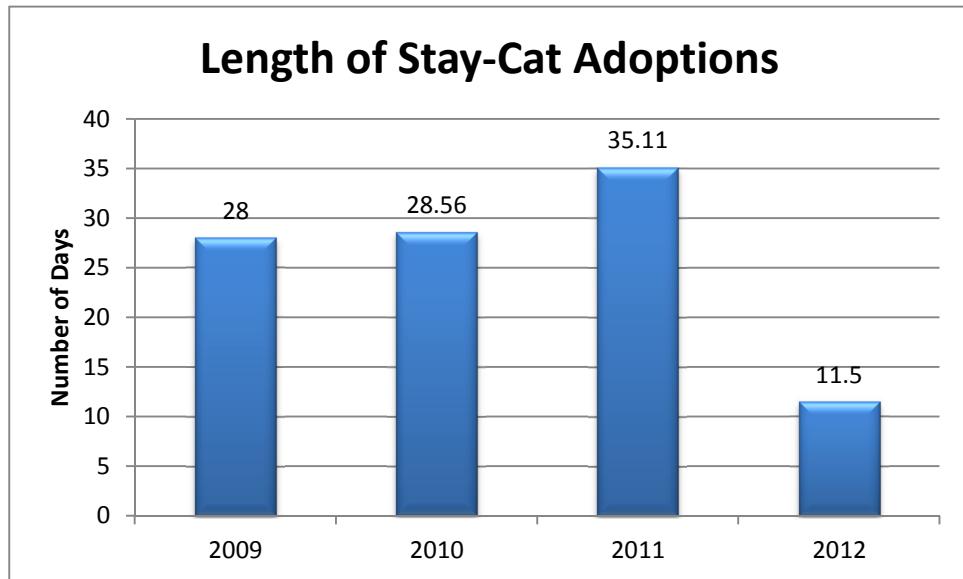
*(Note: Only one (1) cat was returned to its owner in the 2012 figure.)*

## Adoptions

The length of stay for dog adoptions from January to June for 2009 to 2012. In 2012, the average exceeded four (4) weeks:



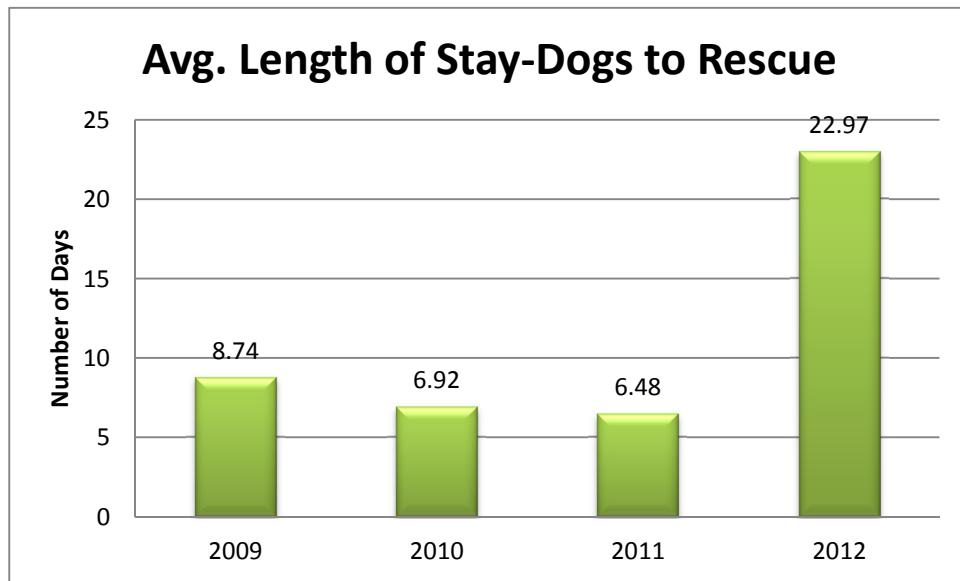
The length of stay for cat adoptions from January to June for 2009 to 2012:



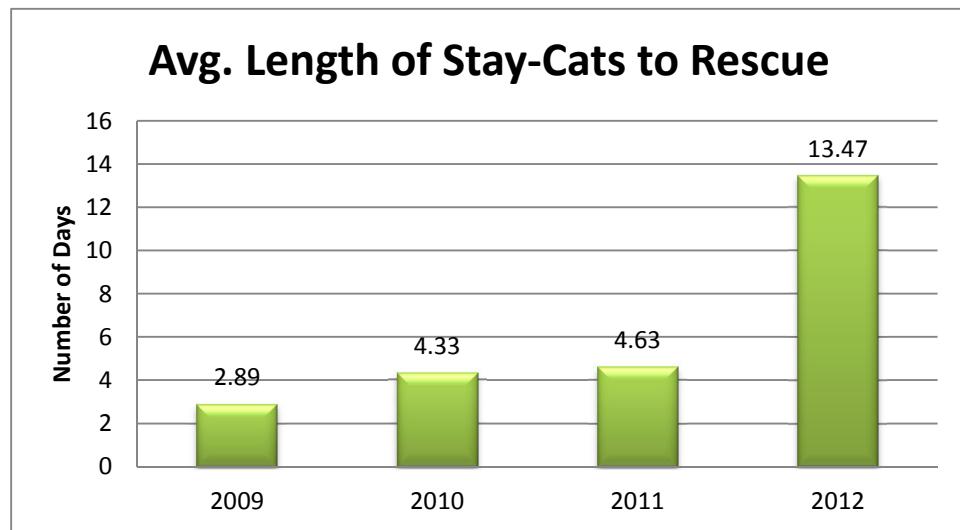
*(Note: In 2012, there were no cat adoptions until May 10, 2012.)*

### Transfers to Rescues

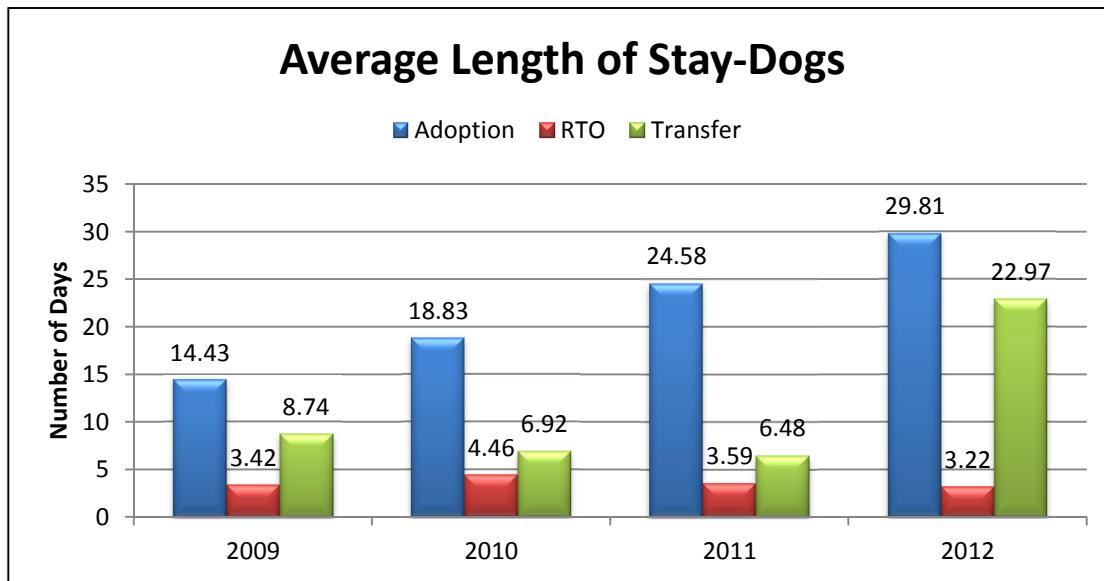
The length of stay for dogs transferred to rescue from January to June for 2009 to 2012:



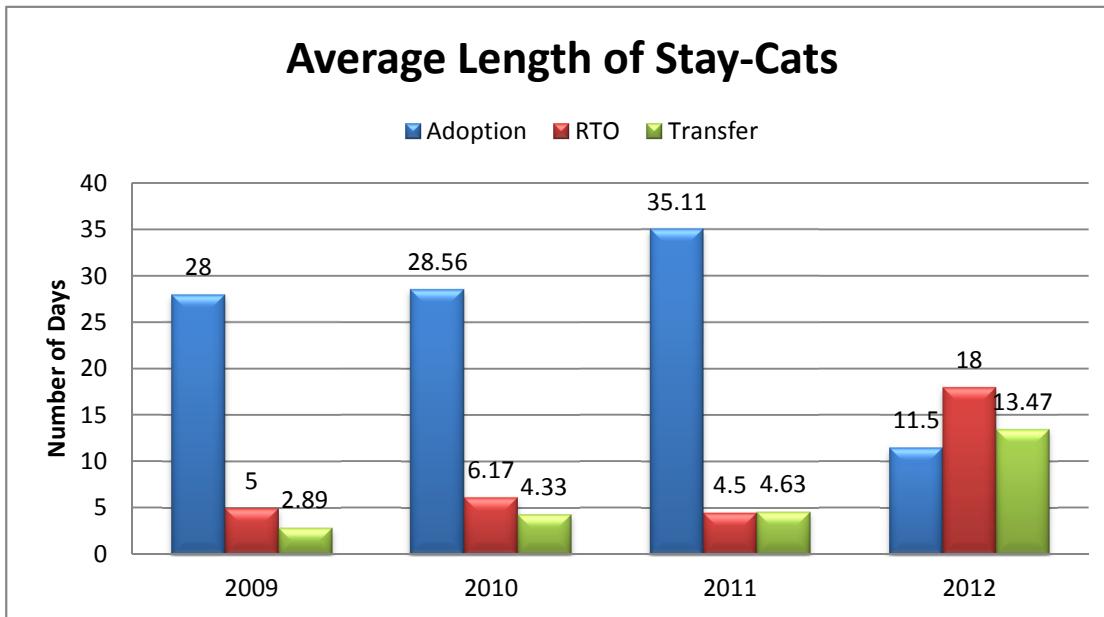
The length of stay for cats transferred to rescue from January to June for 2009 to 2012:



The length of stay for dog live outcomes from January to June for 2009 to 2012:



The length of stay for cat live outcomes from January to June for 2009 to 2012:



*Overall, the MBCAW facility has experienced chronic problems with housing more dogs than the housing capacity can sustain, and the dogs have extended lengths of stay of more than 4 weeks. There are backlogs at all critical flow-through points for movement of dogs from intake to final disposition, whether it is live release or euthanasia. This has resulted in very crowded conditions, forcing the housing of 2 or more dogs in runs designed to house 1 dog and holding small dogs and puppies in cages that are inhumane for housing for more than 1 day. Crowding leads to stress, ineffective sanitation, increased contact rates between dogs, and decreased capacity for staff to provide adequate care. This affects the health and welfare of the dogs, promotes disease outbreaks, and ultimately compromises the life-saving capacity of the shelter.*

## Recommendations for MBCAW

The primary goal is to work within the physical capacity of the shelter to provide humane care. This depends on effective management of the population so that the housing capacity and animal care capacity is not exceeded. Since the number of dogs entering the shelter is unlikely to change, population management depends on the timely movement of dogs from intake to outcome with no delays at critical flow-through points. Therefore, length of stay is the most important variable that can be manipulated to keep the population within the capacity for humane care. Hoarding of animals in the shelter results in wastage of resources and decreased life-saving capacity. Improving the efficiency of flow-through to disposition minimizes length of stay, resulting in less euthanasia and more live release of dogs.

1. Designate a skilled staff member or the Senior Animal Shelter Attendant to track important metrics for effective population management (i.e. Population Manager).
  - Should have expertise in mining data from the Chameleon software program to track the following population statistics:
    - Intake by source and age categories
    - Live release by outcome and age categories
    - Euthanasia by categories
    - Required stray holding capacity and length of stay in stray holding
    - Adoption driven capacity and length of stay in adoption.
  - Assures adequate capacity at each critical flow-through point from intake to outcome
  - Communicates with a pet placement partners in the community to facilitate diversion of puppies, kittens, purebreds, and owner surrendered animals at intake to lessen strain on the housing capacity.
  - Is familiar with the types of animals preferred by adopters and pet placement partners in the community.
  - Participates in “Daily Rounds” (described below) to help define the likely pathway for each dog starting at intake (adoption, transfer, euthanasia).
  - Assists with selection of Fast Track and Slow Track dogs for the adoption section (described below).
  - Facilitates transfer of dogs to pet placement partners at the end of the stray hold period and after a defined period in adoption (described below).
2. “Daily Rounds” is the most important tool for effective population management. Daily Rounds improves flow-through efficiency, decreases length of stay in stray holding or adoption, decreases wasted animal care days, prevents crowding, and provides early recognition of individual animal needs.
  - To be effective, daily rounds requires a defined system to communicate decisions and required actions, to deliver prompt action on decisions, and to provide clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability.
  - The ideal daily rounds team consists of the shelter veterinarian, the shelter manager, the population manager, the kennel supervisor, and an assistant to record action items identified during daily rounds.
  - Rounds should be conducted 7 days a week, with trained staff assigned to stand in when regular rounds team is not available.
  - For each animal, daily rounds defines the likely outcome and should address the following:
    - Who are you?
    - How are you?
    - Are you where you should be?
    - Do you need something today?
    - Do you need something to be scheduled for later?

- The actions necessary to move each animal forward in their pathway are recorded and assigned to a staff member for completion. Systematic review of action lists and completion dates can provide clues to delays in critical flow-through areas and help identify needs for additional capacity.
- See the “Veterinary Services” section for more detail on conduction of “Daily Rounds”.

3. Another tool for improving animal flow-through efficiency is the “Fast Track - Slow Track” pathway for adoptable dogs and cats.

- Selection of animals for the Fast Track or Slow Track is done by the Daily Rounds Team.
- Selection for the Fast Track or Slow Track pathway starts at intake so that these animals can move to the adoption section the day that the stray hold period expires.
- The pathway for owner surrendered animals can be determined the day of relinquishment so that selected animals can move to the adoption section immediately.
- Fast Track animals:
  - Goal is to turnover housing rapidly to increase flow of dogs and cats through adoptions while preserving physical and behavioral health.
  - Fast Track adoptions have the greatest potential to increase the life-saving capacity of the shelter.
  - Select healthy animals with high adoption appeal. This generally includes puppies, kittens, small breed dogs, pure breeds, friendly outgoing dogs and cats.
  - Reserve at least 50% of the adoption space for the Fast Track dogs and cats.
  - Expect adoption within 7 days.
  - If not adopted within 10 days, transfer to a pet placement partner or move to Slow Track.
- Slow Track animals:
  - These are adoptable animals likely to take 10 days or more for adoption (large breeds, less popular breeds, heartworm-infected dogs that are otherwise healthy)
  - Reserve 50% of the adoption space for Slow Track, but provide a variety of different types of dogs and cats instead of a predominance of a single type.
  - These animals will need more aggressive and attractive marketing to promote their adoption. Consider having a “Canine Corps” to work with the dogs and make attractive and attention-grabbing cards that describe each dog’s greatest attributes for display on their run.
  - If not adopted by 14 days, these animals should be transferred to a pet placement partner instead of held in the shelter for a longer period to minimize the chance for shelter-acquired diseases (infectious and behavioral) that may lead to euthanasia.

4. To optimize the life-saving capacity of the shelter, officially initiate an “Open Selection” paradigm.

- This entails making all animals in the shelter (except legal custody dogs) available for viewing by the public and pet placement partners.
  - This makes every animal available for adoption, not just those considered highly adoptable.
  - Keeping the population within the housing capacity recommendation of 1 dog per run facilitates more efficient and faster cleaning in the mornings so that the kennels are ready for public walk-through by 11:00 am.
- Open Selection allows for pre-selection of dogs and cats during the stray hold period so that they can go to new homes or pet placement partners on the day that the hold period expires.
  - This decreases the strain on the housing capacity, both in stray hold and in the adoption section.
  - The live release rate will be increased with a shorter length of stay in the shelter, saving not only lives, but also precious resources required for humane animal care (staff, budget, etc.).

5. The life-saving capacity of other area pet placement partners should be researched. The shelter should reach out to these partners to increase life-saving capacity by transfer of dogs as soon as they are released from mandatory holding periods.
  - The shelter should aggressively develop a working relationship with other adoption groups for immediate transfer of any dog as soon as it is available. The Population Manager should be the liaison with pet placement partners.
  - Dogs should not be held in the shelter if a group will take it. Although staff prefer to keep highly adoptable dogs so that the shelter receives credit for adoption, this attitude can cost lives by increasing the population beyond the capacity for humane housing and care, leading to euthanasia due to lack of space or to shelter-acquired diseases (infectious and behavior deterioration).
  - The staff should celebrate as their victory the live release of any animal, whether by adoption directly from the shelter or transfer to a pet placement partner for subsequent adoption.
  - See Community Outreach for more details and suggestions.

## Intake Processing

### Overview

Animal intake is possibly the most important contact point for animals in the shelter system. At intake, the animal is 1) identified through physical description, photograph, and microchip scanning; 2) triaged through examination, referral for medical conditions, or possible reunification with owner; and, 3) provided preventive treatments (vaccines, parasite treatment). Each step is essential to ensuring that animals have the best chance at a positive outcome.

Another essential role of intake is to mitigate animal stress as much as possible during the process in order to facilitate adaptation to the shelter environment. This will, in turn, protect animal welfare. All efforts should be made to minimize stress at intake. If animals are emotionally traumatized at entry, they can become sensitized to the shelter environment, potentially decreasing their ability to cope in the shelter setting, which impacts welfare and adoptability.

Shelter health care should start with a brief physical exam as soon as possible after admission. The exam should allow recognition animals with obvious illness and identification of animals requiring immediate further medical care. Intake exams help to limit widespread disease, group animals in the shelter, and initiate good data management. Other things that can be accomplished as a part of intake exam include making certain an animal's description is accurate by checking neuter status and age, conducting a preliminary assessment of temperament, and starting an accurate medical record.

An essential component of examination at intake includes detection of microchips to enable animal identification and reunification of pets with their owners. Scanning with a global microchip reader enables the shelter to detect any frequency of microchip identification (125, 128, and 134.2 kHz), and scanning at multiple points during an animal's shelter stay provides the greatest safety net for microchip detection.

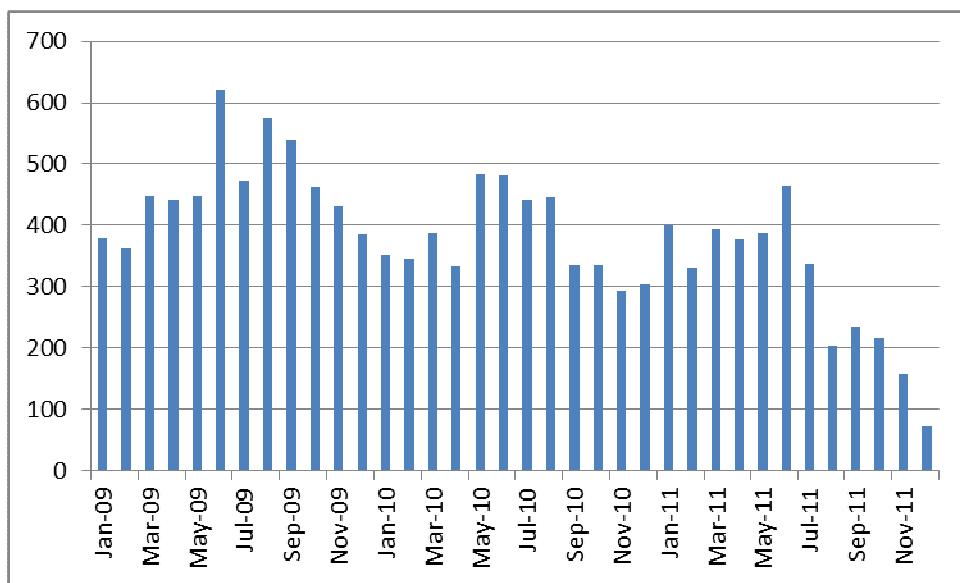
In general, shelters contain a random source population with a largely unknown vaccine history, high population turnover, and significant risk for transmission of infectious diseases. Vaccines are one of the most important and potentially lifesaving tools shelters have available. Vaccinations minimize spread of infectious diseases in a high-density, high-risk population such as in a shelter. Vaccination against common or severe diseases can provide protection against infection or at least reduce the severity and duration of clinical disease. This may lead to increased adoptions and community support. Vaccinated animals are significantly less likely to shed virus than unvaccinated animals, which may improve population health. Modified-live vaccines are recommended instead of inactivated vaccines because of quicker onset of immunity and greater efficacy in overcoming maternal antibody interference.

Delaying vaccination or not vaccinating certain populations can compromise the efficacy of a disease control program and lead to sustained outbreaks of infectious disease. The national vaccination guidelines for shelters recommend that all dogs and cats be vaccinated immediately at intake regardless of source (stray vs. surrendered), temperament, physical status, legal status, or final outcome. Since the typical shelter environment provides a significant risk for disease exposure, vaccines should be administered to pregnant animals and animals with mild illness or injury unless they can be housed in excellent isolation facilities to avoid exposure to other animals. The shelter should establish a vaccination policy and assure the policy is communicated to all staff. The policy should define what vaccines are given, when they are administered, which animals are vaccinated, and how and by whom the vaccines are administered, including record keeping and documentation of adverse events.

Internal and external parasites are common in dogs and cats in animal shelters. All animals, regardless of age, source, or final disposition, should be treated for common parasites to protect against illness in the individual, to protect against infection of the population, to prevent environmental contamination, and to minimize zoonotic infection of shelter staff and the public. The basic parasite control protocol includes prophylactic treatment of all animals for the most common parasites at intake, including roundworms, hookworms, fleas and ticks.

Based on the MBCAW monthly data for 2009 to 2011, an average of 380 dogs and cats were admitted each month and processed before entering the shelter population. The average number of incoming animals per day for this period was 18. (Note: This time period was used to show how much staff time is needed for a shelter operating as a "normal" animal control facility. The numbers for January 2012 through June 2012 were far fewer per month/day.)

**Figure 1.** The number of dogs and cats admitted to MBCAW each month from January 2009 to December 2011.



Based on the daily average admitted to MBCAW since 2009, **Figure 2** shows how much staff time is required for proper intake processing based on the recommendation by the National Animal Control Association (NACA) of 15 minutes per animal. These calculations serve as the basis for scheduling staff.

Sufficient time must be allowed for proper intake processing for each animal. Each intake process includes a brief examination, vaccination, deworming, microchip scan, data entry into Chameleon, making a kennel card, taking a photograph of the animal, and finding an appropriate kennel, etc. Insufficient time to carry out procedures for intake, as with any of the essential flow through points, will have a detrimental effect on animal health.

**Figure 2.** Time required for proper intake processing based on 15 minutes per animal as recommended by NACA. The daily average number of dogs and cats are based on the inventory data for MBCAW from January 2009 to December 2011.

No. of dogs and cats admitted daily based on historical inventory data	No. of hours required for processing
18	(18 animals X 15 minutes each)/60 min = 4.5 hours

## Observations

1. Intake processing
  - Data entry: The staff member processing the animal's intake (usually an ACO) entered the information into Chameleon and printed off a cage card prior to taking the animal to the kennel/cage.
  - Animal/Owner Surrender Information: Without fail, basic information on owned animals coming into the shelter was not taken nor recorded, e.g. age/birthdate, name, personality information, reason for surrender, etc.
  - Scanning: While there are global scanners available, animals are not routinely scanned for the presence of a microchip.
  - Examination: Staff frequently did not note physical/medical issues on the animal's card nor in Chameleon.
  - Photography: A digital photograph is taken of the animal on intake. However, a majority of the dogs were photographed while on a "catch pole." Photographing animals on catch poles gives the public the perception that the animal is aggressive or dangerous.
2. Written protocols for intake processing
  - There are no written protocols for intake processing. Draft copies were provided to the new Senior Animal Shelter Attendant after consultant left and are incorporated in the recommendations.
3. Location, equipment and supplies
  - The designated room for intake processing is the room immediately inside the rear shelter doors—the entrance where animals are unloaded from the animal control vehicles. This room adjoins the cat/quarantine room and the main kennel area (aka "Long Runs").
  - A computer terminal used for data entry into Chameleon is in this location, however a printer for printing of a cage card is not. Staff must print the card and then go to the front office area to retrieve the card.
  - There are no scales to weigh animals.
4. Microchip scanning
  - Several global scanners are kept in this room. There are no scanners in the front office. No one knew where extra batteries were kept.
  - There were no written protocols or pictorial guides on proper techniques for microchip scanning.
  - No written protocol was found instructing staff on procedures to follow if a microchip is found. During the consultation, no animals were reported to have microchips.
5. Health examination
  - Animals do not receive a physical examination at intake.
  - None of the staff knew how to sex kittens. Therefore, there was no recordation in Chameleon.
  - Several male dogs in the kennel were noticed to actually be female dogs.
  - Medical concerns noted by non-veterinary staff are reported to the veterinarian on his weekly visit. If the medical condition is severe, staff transports the animal to the veterinarian's office.
  - Age of an animal is consistently not determined or recorded. Nearly all animals admitted to the shelter from 2009 to August 2012 did not have an estimated age entered into the computerized record. There is no chart to aid with determination of age based on dentition.
  - No animals are weighed at intake.
  - Staff members frequently do not wear protective clothing over their kennel clothes during handling of new admissions.
  - There was no clear plan of action to follow if a sick dog was admitted.

6. Vaccinations
  - A vaccine protocol does not exist. Recommendations for a protocol are included in this report. DA2PP and Bordetella vaccines should be administered to every dog on intake; cats should receive FVRCP vaccine.
7. Parasite treatment
  - Animals are not dewormed on intake.
  - Animals are not treated with flea/tick products at intake.
8. Diagnostic testing
  - Testing for heartworms and parvovirus in dogs and FIV, FeLV and feline heartworm in cats is not provided.
9. Staff accountability
  - All ACO's enter the animal's information into Chameleon for those they impound. They also print the kennel cards and place them on the animals' runs/cages.
  - Animals coming into the shelter by the public: The front desk staff does not enter any animal information. A shelter employee is called up front to either take the animal to the back to complete intake processing.

## **Recommendations-Intake Process**

1. A different area for the intake process should be explored, especially if the recommended medical protocols are adopted.
  - The consultant's initial thought is to move the intake operation to the "euthanasia room." While not ideal because it is only accessible from outside of the main building, it does contain suitable lighting and temporary holding cages as well as a stainless steel table.
  - The Surgical Suite is not recommended, unless the County decides not to spay/neuter adopted animals onsite. This room needs to remain as sterile as possible.
2. The room/area dedicated to serve as the intake processing area should include the following materials at all times:
  - Global microchip scanners
  - Properly stored vaccines
  - Properly stored SNAP tests
  - De-wormers and other parasite treatments
  - Floor-type digital scale for weighing dogs; baby scale for weighing puppies and kittens
  - A stainless steel exam table with proper lighting
  - A computer terminal and printer for data entry, photographing, and kennel card processing
  - Proper equipment for safe and humane restraint of dogs and cats
  - Posted protocols for intake processing (identification, physical examination, vaccination, parasite prophylaxis, medical record entries)
  - Posted protocol for selection of the housing area for the animals based on intake source, age, and health status
  - Hand sanitation dispensers or a sink for hand washing
  - Dedicated protective clothing for staff to wear during intake processing
  - Disinfectants for sanitizing the exam table and other surfaces

3. There should be clearly delineated steps for administrative personnel to follow in moving animals from the lobby to the intake area. The administrative personnel should begin the process of entering the animal in Chameleon in order to speed up the process and provide better customer service.
4. A questionnaire should be used to acquire information on owner surrendered animals to aid in the adoption/rescue process. Having basic information will help determine the type of home the animal should go into and hopefully, prevent the animal from being returned to the shelter. A sample questionnaire is included with this report.
5. One of the essential responsibilities of the animal care team is the examination of every animal on intake for injuries, disease, or other conditions that may require immediate intervention. Therefore, a protocol for intake examination performed by a trained and skilled staff member should be developed.
  - Protocol development, staff training, and oversight should be provided by the shelter veterinarian.
  - The protocol should contain step-by-step instructions for physical examination and a clear plan of action for reporting medical problems at intake and tracking responses in the computerized medical record.
  - Provide staff training in how to sex kittens. Laminate and post the chart in the intake area. A copy is provided within this report.
6. Develop and implement a comprehensive microchip identification protocol.
  - Include policies and procedures for scanning at multiple critical points, starting at intake. A recent study found that nearly 13% of microchips detected were found after the animal scanned negative at intake. To maximize the opportunity for detection of microchips at or before critical procedures, include a protocol for scanning at each of the following points:
    - In the field for immediate reunification with owner
    - As part of the intake examination upon entry to the shelter
    - At the time of surgery/microchip implantation, adoption or transfer
    - Prior to euthanasia. If a microchip is found, recover the animal (rather than euthanize) while the chip is traced.
  - Require scanning with a global scanner.
  - Animals should be removed from cages and crates for scanning using the proper techniques provided in the Resources below. Include a system for accountability and oversight at each scanning point. The details of each scan in the animal's permanent record should include:
    - Date of scan
    - Staff member scanning
    - Results of scan
  - Trace all microchips that are detected, even in owner-surrendered animals, as the animal may have another owner or shelter of origin.
  - Train staff responsible for scanning in proper microchip scanning technique.
    - See Resources below for detailed instructions on scanning technique, a scanning diagram, and a microchip webinar.
    - To develop proficiency and confidence with global scanners, train staff by scanning live animals with known microchip identification.
7. Record examination findings (normal and abnormal) and any treatments in the Chameleon medical record for each animal.
8. Weigh all incoming animals and record on the Examination Form and in the computerized medical record.
  - Body weight is a good indicator for health and welfare concerns during an animal's stay at the shelter. Loss of body weight after intake indicates that animals are not eating either due to unmitigated stress or illness.

- Getting an accurate intake weight enables appropriate dosing of parasite treatments and treatments for medical conditions.
- Large and medium-sized dogs can be weighed on a walk-on scale. Small dogs, puppies, cats and kittens can be weighed on a baby scale.
- Consider implementing body condition score assessment as part of the intake physical exam.

9. Record estimated or known ages for all animals in the computerized medical record.

- Intake and outcome data for animals are best presented and evaluated by age group. Substantially different population management challenges are revealed by tracking age groups due to variations such as adopter preferences for certain age groups, disease susceptibility, and need for foster care.
- Adults are defined as  $\geq 6$  months based on eruption of permanent canine teeth.
- Juveniles are defined as  $< 6$  months based on presence of deciduous canine teeth.
- Determine age of each dog based on aging chart.
- Once ages are consistently entered at intake, capacity and animal flow-through can be monitored based on age group.

10. Record the animal's temperament on intake. This will serve as the baseline for comparison of the animal's behavior while in the shelter. This comparison is helpful in gauging each animal's personality as they adapt to the stress of the shelter housing, or in identifying deteriorations in behavior due to stress.

11. Place an identification neckband on every tractable animal to insure accuracy independent of the kennel card.

12. Establish a vaccination protocol for every animal entering the shelter.

- Strategies for vaccination in a shelter are different in many ways from those for a privately owned pet. The likelihood of exposure to disease is very high, and the consequences of infection potentially severe for both the affected animal and the shelter population. A well designed vaccine program can be a life-saving tool to keep shelter animals healthy. Some vaccines provide protection within a few days or even a few hours of administration, and can drastically reduce the frequency of life-threatening disease in the shelter. Other vaccines, while less impressive, can reduce the frequency and severity of disease both within the shelter and after release to adopters or rescue groups. This can help the shelter's reputation and facilitate increased adoptions and improved relations with rescues, conferring a benefit well beyond the vaccine itself.
- Vaccination is not a magic bullet for disease prevention. Even the best vaccines take some time to provide protection, and animals may enter the shelter already incubating disease. In addition, vaccination does not provide protection to 100% of vaccines under the best of circumstances, and animals entering shelters stressed and malnourished may not respond optimally. Finally, vaccines are not available for all diseases of importance in shelters, and do not provide complete protection for some diseases even when there is a vaccine available. Vaccines can help but are never a substitute for good overall animal husbandry.
- Assign and train staff to perform prompt **vaccination of all animals at intake without any delays**. A team of at least 2 trained staff is necessary for safe and effective administration. The trained staff should be available during times of the day when many animals are brought in by the ACOs so that these animals can be promptly processed instead of waiting until the next day.
- If an animal cannot be safely vaccinated because of illness or injury, then it cannot safely remain in a shelter. Rapid vaccination is essential for optimizing the opportunity to prevent or reduce the severity of shelter-acquired infections.
- Staff should be trained on safe handling of dogs and cats, including fractious animals and animals impounded for bite quarantine.

- Staff should be trained on recommended sites for SQ administration of vaccines.
- The core DA2PP and intranasal Bordetella vaccines for dogs should contain modified-live or recombinant components. Core DA2PP vaccination should be repeated 2 weeks after intake for all dogs, and every 2 weeks for puppies until at least 4 months of age. The intranasal Bordetella vaccine should be repeated in 2 weeks for puppies less than 6 months old.
  - Adult animals may not respond optimally to one dose of vaccine, especially if they were debilitated or mildly ill at the time.
  - Young animals are given a series of vaccines in order to overcome maternal antibody interference and ensure that a vaccine is received as soon as possible after maternal antibodies have dropped to a level that allows the animal's immune system to respond.
  - Vaccination more often than every 2 weeks runs the risk of interference by the immune response to the previous vaccine and should be avoided.
- Leptospirosis vaccine is one of the more reactive vaccinations that we use in dogs and therefore not recommended for use in a shelter setting. This vaccine is more likely to cause an allergic reaction for the dog than many of the other vaccines routinely administer. Some of the vaccines only protect against two strains of leptospirosis while others provide protection against four different strains. Though these four strains account for a large percentage of the cases of leptospirosis seen, there are other strains that can cause disease also. There is no vaccination that protects against all potentially infectious strains of leptospirosis. Leptospirosis vaccine should not be administered on puppies less than 12 weeks of age. In addition, it adds approximately 18% to the cost of the core vaccine with lepto added.
- Feline vaccinations are usually grouped into one vaccination (FVRCP).
  - Modified live subcutaneous vaccination is generally recommended because of demonstrated rapid onset of protection and good efficacy in the face of maternal antibody.
  - Kittens should be vaccinated starting at 4-6 weeks of age and revaccinated every 2-4 weeks until 18 -20 weeks of age (start at the earlier end of age range and use the shorter interval when infectious disease risk is high).
  - Adult cats should be vaccinated once at intake. If resources permit, a second vaccination 2-4 weeks later may be beneficial especially if poor health prevented an optimal response to the vaccine given on intake.
- Rabies vaccination is optional, but administration of a 1-year killed rabies virus vaccine is recommended for dogs and cats 3 months of age or older at the time of release from the shelter or at the time of spay/neuter surgery. Georgia state law requires that rabies vaccines be administered by licensed veterinarians only.
- Vaccines should be handled appropriately to minimize the risk of vaccine failure due to temperature abuse. Proper handling includes prompt refrigeration upon delivery to the shelter, maintaining refrigerator at an appropriate temperature (35-45°F) and removing vaccines only at the time of use.
- Staff should be trained on proper disposal of used syringes with needles into the Biohazard containers for sharps - per OSHA regulations, the needles should never be capped prior to disposal.
- Staff should be trained on recognition of vaccine reactions, both immediate and delayed, with a plan of action if a reaction is suspected.
- All training should have written documentation.

13. Implement age-appropriate diagnostic SNAP® tests

- Parvovirus testing should be performed on every puppy 6 months of age or younger. Only one test need be performed on a litter. If the dog is positive for parvovirus, it should be immediately euthanized, the Department of Agriculture notified and the area should be completely sanitized.
- Heartworm testing should be performed on each dog over the age of six (6) months.

- SNAP® Feline Triple® Test (FIV, FeLV and feline heartworm) should be performed on all cats
  - When deciding whether or not to test for FIV in kittens less than 5 or 6 months of age, the County must decide on the policies for procedures to take when there is a positive result. Although the majority of positive results are caused by maternal antibodies rather than true infection, kittens that test positive on an FIV SNAP® test still have a significantly higher likelihood of being truly positive than a kitten that tests negative. In a shelter that has difficulty placing healthy kittens or in a shelter where resources are scarce and adequate housing is not available for FIV positive kittens, euthanasia of kittens that test positive on SNAP® tests is a fair option.
  - If a cat is “going down fast”, it may have panleukopenia. The canine parvovirus SNAP® test is used to diagnose this highly contagious disease.
  - Testing all cats, however, for FIV/FeLV can be costly and utilize a large portion of shelter resources. In creating the protocol, you may wish to consider only testing all cats for FeLV using a well test method (it is less expensive than the combination FeLV/FIV ELISA snap test). Create a policy to test cats for both FeLV and FIV based on a set of criteria that focus testing for both FeLV/FIV combination test on higher- risk cats, such as sick cats or cats in poor condition, cats with multiple bite wounds and cats with dental disease and gingivitis. Combination FeLV/FIV testing should also be performed on cats that will be group housed together.

14. Implement a system for searchable and permanent medical record keeping that automatically prompts planned treatments and booster vaccines. At intake, the following data for vaccination should be recorded in the animal's computerized medical record in Chameleon:

- Date
- Vaccine type and brand
- Vaccine serial/lot number and expiration date
- Vaccination site and route
- Dates for repeat vaccination of animals in the shelter to ensure integration into the daily action list
- Identity of responsible staff

15. ***All dogs and cats should be treated at intake with a dewormer*** that is effective for roundworms and hookworms. Untreated populations (adults, fractious dogs and cats, legal custody cases) serve as a reservoir for infection of other animals, contamination of the environment, and potential zoonotic infection of staff.

- Fenbendazole is a good all-around dewormer, but is not the preferred dewormer for puppies and pregnant or nursing dogs. In addition, it must be given daily for 3 days and repeated for another 3 days at monthly intervals if the dog remains in a high risk environment such as a shelter.
- Although roundworms and hookworms are ubiquitous, whipworms are less common, so it may not be necessary to use fenbendazole as a routine dewormer unless there is laboratory evidence for whips. If there is no evidence for a whipworm problem, then **pyrantel pamoate** (Strongid) is a better choice for all animals, especially for puppies. The dosage for pyrantel pamoate is 10mg/kg body weight.
- All animals should be re-treated 2 weeks later to stop the life cycle of roundworms and hookworms.
- Puppies, kittens and pregnant or nursing animals should be treated with pyrantel pamoate every 2 weeks.

16. ***All dogs and cats should be treated at intake for fleas and ticks*** - untreated populations (fractious animals, legal custody) serve as a reservoir for creating and maintaining a flea and tick infestation in the shelter environment. The only way to prevent infestation of the shelter population is to practice strict flea control as animals enter the shelter.

- There are now many products available to prevent and treat flea infestations. Treatment options include topical products that may also treat other external parasites such as ticks, lice and mites or oral products that mostly only target fleas.
- If the shelter does not have the resources to treat all animals at intake, priority for treatment should be given to animals with obvious flea infestation (i.e. fleas or flea dirt evident on the hair/skin), clinical signs consistent with flea allergy dermatitis (FAD) and litters of puppies and kittens.
- Severely flea infested, anemic kittens and puppies should be treated with a topical product that is approved for use at their age (frontline spray can be used at 2 days of age), dewormed and given supportive care such as sub-cutaneous fluids, warming, syringe feeding if anorexic and antibiotics for any secondary infection
- A cost saving idea is to purchase the largest dog dose of the topical treatment Revolution® and divide it between animals, giving the appropriate dose based on weight. This is legal for shelters to do since this product is regulated by the FDA and not the EPA; this is the only topical product that falls into this category.

17. At intake, the following data for parasite treatment should be recorded in the animal's computerized medical record in Chameleon:

- Date
- Brand of dewormer
- Concentration of dewormer
- Dose
- Body weight as determined by weighing on a scale
- Amount given and route of administration
- Dates for repeat deworming of animals in the shelter and in foster care to ensure integration into the daily action list
- Application of a flea/tick product
- Identity of responsible staff

18. The hard copy of the Examination Form should be stapled to the animal's admittance card and filed.

## Sanitation

### Overview

Careful and effective sanitation by well-trained employees is mandatory for control of infectious disease and reducing the dose of infectious agents in the environment. A clean shelter encourages adoptions and public support as well as protecting animals from illness. Time and money spent on training and supplies for an effective cleaning program will result in decreased costs due to disease. However, if incorrectly performed, cleaning can be ineffective or may actually serve to spread disease. Providing staff with sufficient written guidance, training and supplies, and ensuring that the facility is arranged for easy and effective disinfection, serve as the foundation of a sound program for shelter sanitation.

The basic elements of an effective shelter sanitation program include using effective products, cleaning where it counts, and minimizing stress and fomite transmission. Cleaning protocols should include runs, cages, walkways, food/water bowls, and animal transport vehicles. The protocols should be applied to all housing areas, intake areas, treatment rooms, surgery areas, the front lobby, and any other location in the facility where there is animal contact. Protocols should contain information on how often the area/object is to be cleaned (e.g. after each use, daily, weekly, monthly), who is responsible for cleaning (and who will double check and make sure it has been cleaned adequately), and what cleaning and disinfection products are to be used.

Cleaning/disinfection should proceed from the most vulnerable animals to the least vulnerable animals and from the cleanest areas to the most contaminated areas. Separate cleaning supplies should be dedicated to each area and not swapped between areas. To avoid tracking of infectious agents on shoes and clothing between housing areas (incl. intake), dedicated rubber boots and disposable gowns or smocks are recommended for each area. Ideally, hands should be disinfected after handling each with sanitizers containing 60-90% ethanol alcohol. As an alternative, disposable gloves can be used, throwing away after each animal.

The most frequent comment from the kennel staff was that they did not have enough time to clean the dogs because there were too many and both sides of the double-sided runs were occupied. In reality, the housing of dogs beyond the 60-dog state-imposed limit has created very crowded conditions, resulting in ineffective sanitation, stressful working conditions for the staff, and compromised animal health and welfare. *If the shelter maintained the population at 60 dogs or less, and 20 cats or less, then 4 staff members are needed to feed and clean all enclosures prior to opening the shelter at 11:00 am (3 hours).*

### Observations

During the consultant visit, cleaning and sanitation of animal housing areas and the animal control vehicles was observed.

1. There are no written protocols for cleaning and disinfection.
2. Dog runs were cleaned with the animals in them, resulting in the dogs getting wet and spayed with their own feces.
3. Most staff members were not knowledgeable about general cleaning methods in an animal shelter, including the rationale for all steps.

4. The consultant was told by staff that the four (4) blue 55-gallon drums in the shelter contained the disinfectant. However, staff was never observed using the product. Upon closer inspection, the product was found to be "floor degreaser and drain maintainer", not disinfectant. In addition, it was later discovered that the dispensing system had been broken for some time.
5. The housing units are cleaned once daily, but this takes the entire working day for the staff, with no time left over for spot cleaning later in the day. Consequently, the runs and cages are frequently soiled during hours when the shelter is open to the public.
6. The order of cleaning, in general, was holding (long runs), adoptions, and then the quarantine and cat room; therefore, the dogs and cats in stray cat hold and quarantine were not cleaned until the end of the day. Consequently, dogs in quarantine were forced to sit in soiled runs for most of the day.
7. Staff members' clothing is worn in all areas of the shelter. Their clothing can be heavily contaminated during cleaning and serve as a fomite for infectious diseases. There was no attempt to disinfect hands or feet after contact with individual dogs or stepping in fecal contaminated runs.
8. The runs are cleaned by hosing all surfaces and occasionally scrubbing with a long-handled scrub brush.
9. Water bowls were not removed for cleaning, even after one dog left and another put in the run. The automatic watering system was not scrubbed or disinfected.
10. Feces and uneaten food are not picked up before cleaning. They were merely hosed down the drain.
11. The runs were rinsed by hose and dried with a squeegee. However, most runs were not completely dried; dogs did not have a dry place to lay down for most of the day.
12. Puppies and small dogs were housed in cages and not routinely walked for either elimination or exercise. They were forced to lie in feces and urine for many hours and their coat was soiled.
13. The walkways in the housing areas were cleaned by using straight water from the hose.
14. The outside housing areas do not have adequate drainage; feces have been allowed to build up over time, thus increasing the potential for disease spread. *(Note: When the shelter was inspected by the Department of Agriculture, Inspector Wendi Hilliard stated the outside kennels should only be used for an emergency overcrowding situation.)*
15. Staff members are not assigned to mop the front lobby area despite heavy traffic of people and dogs to and from the kennels.
16. There is no protocol for cleaning and disinfection of the animal control vehicles, nor is there any formal training of the ACOs on sanitation. The ACOs have been asked to clean the animal compartments as well as all supplies (traps, control poles, etc.) in between animals. The ACOs decide whether to use bleach or detergent for cleaning but prepare the bleach by eyeball measurements.
  - Knowledge of the cleaning and disinfection protocol for the animal transport vehicles was variable between ACOs.
  - ACOs were observed washing the inside of the units with only a hose and water.
17. Food bowls and laundry were frequently cleaned by volunteers.
  - The volunteers did not know how much bleach to use for cleaning bowls and laundry, so they went by "smell".

- The food bowls were washed with Dawn detergent then dunked briefly in bleach water prior to rinsing. Bleach requires a contact time of 10 minutes to inactivate infectious agents.
- Dirty laundry was carried by hand from the runs to the laundry room. Feces and food fell out of the laundry onto the walkways and the floor of the laundry room during this transport.

## Recommendations-Sanitation

1. The most important goal for improving sanitation and decreasing stress for the dogs and staff is to reduce the number of dogs in the shelter to a maximum of 60.
  - The dogs will stay in clean runs for most of the day.
  - The time required for cleaning will be reduced from 7 hours to 3 or 4 hours utilizing the current number of staff. It will also decrease stress on the staff and provide time for them to perform other duties, including spot cleaning throughout the day as needed.
  - The risk for spread of contagious diseases will be greatly reduced since dogs are not moved from run to run. This will also improve the accuracy of records on where each dog is housed.
  - Puppies and small dogs will not need to be inhumanely housed in small cages.
2. Dogs must be removed from the run/cages for cleaning.
  - The outside area used for temporary housing should only be used for daily dog exercise while cleaning.
  - Dogs should be moved from the runs to these exercise areas to facilitate proper cleaning and disinfecting.
  - A cleaning and disinfection protocol should be developed and contain detailed steps on how to clean each housing and non-housing area, what product to use, how to dilute it using measuring devices, and what the proper contact time is.
  - The protocol should be posted in each housing and non-housing area and in the animal control vehicles.
  - All staff involved in cleaning should be trained on the new protocols and supervised daily to ensure compliance.
3. Staff should be assigned specific housing areas for cleaning. If staff members are responsible for more than one area, then the order of cleaning should be Adoptions first, followed by Holding and Quarantine.
4. Provide personal protective wear and cleaning/disinfecting supplies dedicated to each housing area (Adoption, Holding, Quarantine).
  - Rubber boots, clean aprons or coveralls, gloves, and eye protection should be available at the entrance to each kennel area and worn by staff during cleaning due to potential splattering of fecal matter and disinfectant. This clothing should not be worn outside of the assigned kennel area.
  - In general, footbaths are ineffective for disinfecting shoes contaminated by cleaning. Therefore, dedicated rubber boots should be worn during cleaning. The boots are easily disinfected.
  - Each kennel area should have a functional hose with hot and cold water, a labeled sprayer or foamer for detergent application, a separate labeled sprayer or foamer for disinfectant application, a scrub brush, scraper, bucket, pooper scooper, heavy duty trash bags, and squeegees.
  - Each kennel area should have a working hand sanitizer that contains 60- 90% ethanol alcohol. Staff should disinfect gloves or hands after handling each dog, or at minimum between each area and before and after handling puppies, new admissions, or sick dogs.

- Staff should inventory all supplies in each area at least weekly. Have backup supplies for critical items such as squeegees and disinfectant applicators, as these are prone to breakage under heavy use.

5. Effective sanitation requires applying a germicidal agent to a basically clean surface. This requires use of both detergent and disinfectant products on a daily basis.

- Detergents should be used to clean all surfaces of organic material (feces, urine, saliva, nasal discharge, food, dirt) prior to disinfection. A combination of Dawn and bleach should be used to remove body oils and dirt that builds up in kennels and cages over time and can render disinfectants ineffective.
- Disinfectants must be applied to a basically clean, non-porous surface, free of organic matter. Porous surfaces such as wood, carpeting, unsealed concrete and turf can't be completely disinfected.
- Disinfectants MUST be used at the correct concentration. Going by smell or color or "eyeballing" leads to extra expense and potential toxicity if too much is used, and ineffectiveness if too little is used.
- Disinfectants and detergents should not be mixed together.

6. Invest in "quick connect" hose couplings to reduce staff time in changing from the Trifectant spray bottles to the hose ends.

7. General steps to follow before cleaning each housing area

- Walk through the area and observe each dog. Record observations on the daily observation sheet for each dog (see Veterinary Services section.) If there is any sign of illness (vomiting, diarrhea, bleeding, coughing, nasal discharge, unwilling to move), immediately notify the supervisor and do not clean that run until all other cleaning has been completed.
- Assemble all supplies and equipment dedicated for use in each area, including a cart to put supplies and dirty bowls/bedding on.

8. General steps to follow for cleaning and disinfection of each housing area

- Put on dedicated protective clothing for cleaning.
- Move dogs to the outside exercise area.
- Scoop feces and food from the runs using a pooper scooper and discard into a designated bucket.
- Empty any left-over food from the run into a trash bag. Empty water bowls. Tilt beds up against a wall. Put food bowls and laundry on the cart. The laundry should be put in plastic bags for transport to the laundry area.
- Spray all surfaces, beds, water bowl, and walkway with detergent and use brush to remove debris. This includes the chain link fence.
- Once all empty runs have been cleaned with detergent and rinsed, then spray with 1% Trifectant properly prepared by the applicator attached to a hose.
- After a minimum of 10 minutes contact time, squeegee walkway, runs, and beds dry. Fill water bowls with fresh water. (Rinsing is unnecessary.)
- Move all dogs to the cleaned and dried runs.
- Empty pooper scooper bucket into an appropriate receptacle for disposal. Wash pooper scooper, bucket and brush with detergent, rinse, then fill bucket with 1% Trifectant and place the pooper scooper and brush into the bucket.
- Remove protective clothing.
- Transport soiled bowls and bedding to appropriate areas for cleaning.

9. You may also want to consider switching from Trifectant to the Wysiwash system as a disinfectant for all dog housing areas. (Or at least consider in the new shelter.)
  - Wysiwash is calcium hypochlorite. It is much less corrosive and exponentially more effective than liquid bleach.
  - The system is composed of a sanitizer unit that attaches to a hose. The sanitizer unit contains the calcium hypochlorite tablets.
  - Each tablet has a total use time of approximately 3.5 hours.
  - It is recommended to leave the Wysiwash solution on a surface for at least 2 minutes, and you do not have to rinse.
  - The calcium hypochlorite is more “hose friendly” in that it does not clog up the spray nozzle like Trifectant does.
  - pH neutral degreasers and soaps are safe for use with the Wysiwash solution. Quaternary ammonia products or products that are not compatible for use with chlorine products must be avoided.
  - This system should facilitate more complete coverage of run surfaces and walk ways with decreased cost, manual labor, and staff time.
  - The estimated cost is \$0.01/ gallon compared to Trifectant at \$0.25/gallon. There is an initial start-up cost to purchase the applicators.
10. If Trifectant use is continued for dog housing areas, then ensure the following:
  - Trifectant 1% solution should be prepared fresh weekly according to manufacturer instructions - it is not inactivated by light and is less corrosive to metal and skin than bleach.
  - Instructions for correct dilutions should be posted in each area along with measuring devices, labeled containers for dilution and application, and safety equipment for handling of concentrated stock solutions or powder (gloves, goggles, mask).
  - For optimum killing activity, environmental surfaces contaminated with feces, urine, vomit, blood, and nasal discharge must first be cleaned with a detergent and rinsed before applying the Trifectant solution.
  - The minimum required contact time for Trifectant is 10 minutes.
  - If Wysiwash is selected for cleaning the dog housing areas, Trifectant can be used for cleaning the animal control vehicles and mopping floors in other areas of the shelter. Mops should not be used for cleaning dog housing areas.
11. Train each ACO on how to clean and disinfect the truck compartments and equipment, including how to mix Trifectant solution accurately and safely, and post the protocol in each truck.
  - Provide protective clothing and eyewear for use when making Trifectant solution.
  - Insure that the compartments are cleaned and disinfected in between animals, including the required 10 minute contact time for Trifectant. The Trifectant can air dry in the compartments.
  - Clean and disinfect other equipment such as control poles, snappy snares, cat tongs, snake tongs, nets, and any transport cages in between use. These can be sprayed with Trifectant.
  - Use a 30 gallon trash can for soaking cages so that all surfaces are submerged in the Trifectant solution for at least 10 minutes. Cages with visible organic debris should be scrubbed. Mixed Trifectant will stay activated for 7 days.
12. Provide a protocol for cleaning dirty bowls and laundry and train the volunteers on the protocol.
  - Clean bowls with detergent first.
  - Soak bowls in 5% bleach solution for 10 minutes before rinsing. A 5% bleach is made by adding 1/2 cup bleach to 1 gallon of water. The bleach solution must be made fresh since it is inactivated by exposure to light. In addition, it is inactivated by organic debris, so bowls must be cleaned with detergent first.
  - Follow the directions on the bleach containers for the amount to add to a load of laundry.

- Dry laundry in a dryer using the high heat selection. Clean the lint from the lint trap BEFORE every load to minimize the potential for fires. Some shelters in Florida have been destroyed by fires associated with lint buildup in the trap. The dryer should not be left running after hours.

13. The area most overlooked by staff is the tops of the cages and runs. At a minimum, the tops of all cages should be cleaned and disinfected weekly.

## **Nutrition**

### **Overview**

Sufficient wholesome food and clean water is a necessity for humane animal care. Insufficient nutritional intake, whether because food or water is not available or because the circumstances are such that animals do not or cannot eat (e.g. due to stress, feces or dirt in food or water dishes, competition for food, spoiled food, or simply an unpalatable diet) will compromise animals' ability to respond to vaccines and ward off disease, as well as being a direct cause of compromised welfare.

### **Observations**

1. Protocols for feeding were not posted in any housing areas.
2. In general, co-housed dogs were not always separated during feeding; multiple food bowls were used.
3. The dogs were fed in the morning prior to their cages being cleaned. As a result, the food bowls were placed into runs containing urine and feces. Some puppies were not fed age-appropriate diets.
4. There is no time for staff to observe if an animal is eating or not. Nor is there a system in place to record appetite or weight of the animal.
5. Neither dog weights nor body conditions are monitored despite the fact that many dogs may stay for weeks or longer.
6. There is no system to monitor if an animal ate or not. Due to this lack of communication, the consultant noted that some dogs did not eat.
7. Most of the dogs are being over-fed and food wasted because there is no feeding protocol in place.
8. There is not a consistent amount of time allowed for food consumption; the time allotted is dependent on the order that the dogs are cleaned. For example, the dogs in adoption had food for less than 1 hour while the dogs in Holding and Quarantine had food for hours.
9. Many of the dogs had loose stools or excessive fecal volume. Frequent dietary changes can result in diarrhea.
10. Cats were not supplied with dry food at all times.
11. Most of the food is stored in an outside storage shed. Although the shelter had been "fumigated", vermin were still present.

## Recommendations-Nutrition

1. A feeding protocol should be developed and contain detailed steps on how to feed adults and juveniles, including amounts, age-appropriate diets, and how much time should be allotted for eating. (See Resources for guidelines.)
  - The protocol should be posted in each housing area and in the food room.
  - All staff involved in feeding should be trained on the new protocols and supervised daily to ensure compliance.
  - Ideally, dogs should be fed at the end of the day (for one time/day feeding) and never in a dirty cage/run.
  - Due to their eating habits, cats should have food available 24 hours.
2. Create an observation chart for each animal. (See sections on Population Management and Veterinary Services)
  - This chart should record the animal's attitude, appetite, stools, urine, other (vomit, etc.), weight, and/or body condition score.
  - This chart needs to be completed by the kennel staff first thing every morning before cleaning so that it is available for Daily Rounds to help the rounds team make more appropriate assessments.
3. Develop a protocol for monitoring the weight and body condition score of the animals.
  - Visual assessment is not adequate, especially for long-haired dogs/cats.
  - Train staff to perform a body condition score. Post the illustrations of body scores in the kennel.
  - Record the bi-weekly body scores in the medical record.
  - An added benefit of bi-weekly body condition monitoring is that it insures the animals are evaluated on a regular basis and provides a simultaneous opportunity to assess other measures of mental and physical wellness.
4. Puppies and kittens will need to be monitored more frequently due to their rapid growth.
5. Feed a consistent high-quality diet in the appropriate quantity for the size and age of the animal.
  - Ask for donated food to be from a consistent line or brand of product.
  - Evaluate the cost of purchasing food through distributors such as Hill's, Purina or Pedigree that offer a shelter discount. (*Note: The shelter generally feeds Pedigree; check for shelter discounts.*)
  - Age-appropriate diets should be available in both dry and canned form. The canned form can be used for animals that are not eating.
  - Post a feeding chart that can accompany the feed cart.
6. Animals that do not eat for 24 hours should be reported to the Sr. Animal Shelter Attendant or veterinarian for a medical exam.
7. Do NOT "re-feed" used food. Any food that was not eaten should be dumped in a bucket and disposed of at the end of the day. DO NOT place this uneaten food back into the main food supply.
8. The food storage shed needs to be constantly monitored for vermin.
9. Clean metal trash cans with lids should be used to store food in the shelter. Each container must be identified as to cat, kitten, dog or puppy food. (Metal cans are used as mice/rats can and will chew through the plastic cans.)

## Veterinary Services

### Overview

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) believes it is in the best interest of community and animal health for every shelter to have a formal relationship with a veterinarian. Adequate veterinary staff must be present for a shelter to function efficiently while providing an acceptable standard of care for the animals. The primary responsibility of the shelter veterinarian is oversight of the health and welfare of every animal in the shelter. Veterinarians are skilled in diagnosis of disease, making treatment choices, performing medical and surgical procedures, and making critical decisions. Veterinarians should focus on daily medical rounds, examination of all animals starting at intake with continuation to final disposition, spay/neuter surgeries, and oversight of infectious disease management protocols. Disease recognition and diagnosis of the in-shelter population must be a priority for the veterinary services and staff. Failure to do so is likely to lead to a spiral of illness, prolonged shelter stays, and in worst case, disease outbreak, which can ultimately result in substantially increased costs, decreased adoptions, compromised welfare and needless death. Clear medical records are critical to properly track disease and flow of animals through a shelter. Proper documentation of physical exams, treatments, and diagnostics also aid doctors in combating outbreaks and designing protocols. Trained veterinary technicians provide invaluable assistance with disease recognition, patient care, and preparation of animals for medical and surgical procedures.

### Observations

1. The county has a contract veterinarian. His duties primarily include euthanasia, diagnosis and treatment of sick and injured animals, and spay/neuter surgeries for adopted animals. He only makes one (1) site visit each week, generally on Wednesdays. As a general rule, only those animals identified by personnel as having a health issue were examined.
2. There was no clear system in place by which the veterinarian could regularly monitor the health of sheltered animals or for care-giving staff to communicate their observations to the veterinarian. Staff would put a note on an animal's cage/run and advise the front office staff to alert the veterinarian upon arrival. Notes on medical conditions, diagnosis and treatment were frequently not input in Chameleon. This system is neither sufficient for clear communication and accountability nor conducive to ongoing cases and permanent record keeping.
3. There is no system in place for staff to record daily observations on animals, such as eating, drinking, urination, defecation, behavior, or welfare.
4. The staffing level and record-keeping system in place at the time of the consultation did not assure that intake and follow-up treatments are performed in a timely manner. Delay of intake medications of several days was not uncommon, which can increase the risk for disease transmission and overall poor animal health.
5. The lack of individual identification on dogs and litters of puppies makes it difficult to maintain individual medical records, to monitor the status of individual dogs, and to identify dogs needing special care.
6. When an animal is taken to a local veterinary clinic for medical treatment or surgery, no veterinary notes could be found in the animals' paperwork at the shelter. While veterinary records may exist at the local veterinarian for shelter animals, these records are not being

transferred to the shelter to include with the animals' paperwork and adopters are not receiving these records at the time of adoption.

7. The lack of not using computerized medical record system creates a number of problems:
  - Currently, medical notes are kept on paper posted on each kennel. There is no system for compiling these in a permanent record or to replace papers that are lost or damaged.
  - It is difficult to monitor the health status of animals over time, such as weight gain or loss, behavioral improvement or deterioration, or response to treatment.
  - Records cannot be searched to detect disease patterns within the shelter or an animal's previous medical history should it be needed after the animal leaves the shelter.
  - It is not possible to efficiently survey the population to detect missed treatments and medications. As a general rule, the ACO who took the animal to the vet and obtained medications was responsible for medicating. If the officer was not on weekend duty and forgets to tell the next officer, the animal was many times not medicated on the weekends.
  - Daily treatment lists were not provided to staff.
  - The lack of automated prompts to identify next steps such as booster vaccines or rechecks contributes to missed treatments.

## **Recommendations-Veterinary Services**

1. Institute a system of Daily Rounds to manage the population.
  - Daily Rounds is a system designed to improve animal flow-through efficiency, decrease wasted animal care days, and decrease length of stay.
  - Daily rounds provides an opportunity to provide early recognition of needs of individual animals:
    - Welfare and stress
    - Medical needs
    - Next steps
2. The ideal Daily Rounds team ideally consists of the shelter veterinarian, the Senior Animal Shelter Attendant, and an "assistant" to record action items identified during daily rounds.
  - The daily rounds team should review daily observation forms for eating, drinking, urination, defecation, activity and evaluate concerns submitted by caregivers.
  - Rounds should be conducted 7 days a week, with trained staff assigned to stand in when the regular rounds team is not available.
3. To be effective, Daily Rounds requires:
  - A system to communicate decisions and follow-up on actions.
  - Prompt actions on decisions.
  - Clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability.
4. For each animal, daily rounds should address:
  - Who are you?
  - How are you?
  - Are you where you should be?
  - Do you need something today?
  - Do you need something to be scheduled for later?
5. Required actions are recorded on the "Daily Rounds Action List."
  - Veterinary examination.
  - Diagnostic testing.
  - Behavior evaluation.

- Initiate or discontinue treatment.
- Next step in flow-through pathway.
- Actions that require veterinary services are recorded on the “Daily Veterinary Checklist.”
- Documenting all actions in Chameleon, including follow-up dates, will enable consistent and complete tracking of action decisions, follow-through, and record-keeping.
- Systematic review of action lists and completion dates can provide clues to delays in critical flow-through areas and help identify needs for additional capacity.

6. Develop a system by which observations by kennel staff are recorded on a Daily Observation Form on each cage. Kennel staff should complete the forms each day so they are available for review by the rounds team.

7. Provide a practical system for staff to communicate concerns to the veterinarian.

- Post a copy of the Daily Veterinary Check List in the kennel area where staff can easily add animals they have concerns about.

8. Ensure complete written veterinary records from local veterinary clinics are included with an animal’s paperwork if they receive any care or treatment. These medical records likely already exist at the respective veterinary clinics, but the shelter needs to ensure copies of these records are placed with the animal’s paperwork so staff is aware of veterinary care received and adopters receive pertinent medical information.

9. Implement a policy whereby only Animal Shelter Attendants (or medical staff if hired in the future), perform daily medications of animals. This will ensure that trained individuals are administering medications as well as monitoring these animals on a daily basis. Require that individuals administering medications wear proper personal protective equipment, including gloves and/or gowns, and change clothes between handling sick and healthy animals, to reduce fomite transmission of disease between animals in the shelter.

10. Utilize the Chameleon shelter software program to create medical records for each animal.

- This creates a permanent medical record that can be used to track progress over time and to provide accountability.
- The system can be used to order future items such as recheck examinations, repeated medical treatments, spay/neuter surgery scheduling and follow-up, and booster vaccinations.
- The system can be used to generate a daily To-Do list so all required care is identified.

If surgeries are to be performed in-house (and if surgeries will be performed on animals being transferred):

11. Assign staff to clean all cages in the surgical suite after they are vacated for the day so that they are available for animals requiring surgery the next day without delay. Kennel staff should wear dedicated boots and outerwear and use dedicated supplies to avoid contaminating the area with any infectious agents that may be present in the kennels.

12. Calculate required surgery capacity to assure that all animals receive surgery on the day it is due to avoid wasting animal care days. Calculations should account for shelter animals being adopted and any animals that must be neutered before transferring to other agencies.

- Required veterinary time is calculated as the time to perform all functions related to surgery:
  - Examination
  - Average surgery times
  - Record keeping

- Example: 100 animals are adopted or transferred each month and require sterilization surgery prior to leaving. If surgery is performed 4 days a week for a total of 16 surgery days in any month, then 6.25 dogs must be sterilized each surgery day. If each examination takes 5 minutes to perform and each surgery takes 20 minutes, the veterinarian would need approximately 2.6 hours to sterilize 6.25 dogs.
- Required technician time is calculated as the time to perform all functions related to surgery:
  - Locating animal
  - Weighing and calculating drug doses
  - Drawing up drugs and inducing anesthesia
  - Surgical preparation
  - Assistance and monitoring during surgery
  - Recovery
  - Preparing surgery packs
  - Cleaning the surgery area
  - Ordering supplies
  - Record keeping

## Euthanasia

### Overview

Euthanasia, by definition, is a “good death.” The goal of euthanasia policies and procedures in the shelter should be to provide the best possible experience for the animal being euthanized. In a facility like MBCAW, where approximately 3700 dogs and cats are euthanized annually, the impact of euthanasia policies and procedures on animal welfare is tremendous.

The best practice for euthanasia of cats and dogs is known as EBI – Euthanasia by Injection of sodium pentobarbital. MBCAW utilizes the EBI method using Fatal Plus, and excellent product. Euthanasia encompasses more than the injection of the euthanasia drug. It begins with staff training and oversight and involves all stages from when an animal is identified for euthanasia, including room environment, handling and restraint, sedation, administration of the euthanasia drug, and confirmation of death.

### Observations

1. Location and supplies
  - A outside room off the sally port is designated for euthanasia
    - The euthanasia room does not have a computer for verifying animal identity and records, checking for holds and entering drugs, although one is located in the intake area.
    - The room has a metal examination table, several stainless steel holding cages and room for supplies.
    - The room was well-lit and of adequate size. The room was not always cleaned properly after euthanasia.
    - The euthanasia room is almost always unlocked, whether or not euthanasia is being performed. (*Note: this was corrected with changing all locks; the surgical suite and euthanasia rooms were keyed alike but separate from all other keys.*)
    - A freezer is located in the sally port.
  - Additional supplies observed in the room included garbage/body bags, needles, syringes, a sharps container and a locked drug box. A scale was not present.
  - Cleaning supplies such as a mop/mop bucket and disinfectant are not located in the room, but are nearby.
2. Drug Storage
  - Sedation drugs and Fatal Plus are not kept on the shelter property. They are transported to and from the shelter by the contract veterinarian.
3. Selection of animals for euthanasia
  - As a general rule, animals were selected for euthanasia based on known or observed behavioral history, bite case history or time and space.
  - As each animal selected, electronic records were checked for notes, holds or other information that might preclude euthanasia.
4. Pre-euthanasia sedation protocol
  - Identification of dogs needing pre-euthanasia sedation is based on staff experience with the animal.

- A “cocktail” of two or more sedation drugs are used when needed. Written protocols for pre-euthanasia sedation do not exist.
- Recording of pre-euthanasia drugs on the animals’ records or the euthanasia log is nonexistent.

5. Euthanasia protocol

- Written protocols for euthanasia do not exist.
- Euthanasia is performed by the contract veterinarian with the assistance of shelter staff.
- Death is verified when there is a lack of all of the following: heartbeat (no palpable pulse), respiration and corneal reflex (pupils fixed and dilated).
- Fatal Plus is used for euthanasia by injection at a dose of 1cc per 10 pounds body weight given intravenously.
- The drug is drawn up using a new needle and syringe for each dog.
- Fatal Plus is injected intravenously in a cephalic or saphenous vein.
- Drugs and amounts used are logged onto a paper form/log and signed off by the veterinarian and assisting shelter staff; they are not logged directly into Chameleon by any staff member.
- The animal’s disposition is updated after all euthanasia is completed, generally by the office staff.
- Euthanasia was frequently interrupted by other staff.

6. Confirmation of Death

- A stethoscope was used by the veterinarian to auscultate for heartbeat.
- Frequently, a needle/syringe was inserted into the heart after the animal was “down” to observe the absence of a heartbeat.

7. None of the animals euthanized were scanned for a microchip even though a universal scanner was available.

8. None of the animals euthanized are weighed on the day of euthanasia, as the shelter does not have scales.

9. On several occasions, positive identification was not performed by the staff member as animals were brought into the euthanasia room. While staff was supposed to check the kennel card with the ID neck band, this did not happen, resulting in the wrong dog being euthanized.

10. As a matter of procedure, one dog was brought in and sedated and/or euthanized. His body was left on the table or floor and another dog was brought in and sedated and/or euthanized. The staff then returned to the first dog, verified death, bagged and placed him in the freezer or on the floor of the sally port. Then another dog was brought in and euthanized, death was verified on the second dog, and so forth.

11. Cats were generally euthanized in the cat room, using an injection of Fatal Plus into the peritoneal cavity.

12. At the time of visit, none of the staff were certified to perform euthanasia by the current veterinarian, in accordance with Georgia law. Several, however, had been certified by the prior veterinarian.

13. Euthanasia is generally performed on Wednesdays. Incoming sick or injured animals are delivered to the contract veterinarian on an “as needed basis” during the week and on weekends.

14. The sharps container was almost full at the time of visit. Staff did not know who to contact for proper disposal.

## Recommendations-Euthanasia

1. Provide veterinarian oversight and a system of staff accountability.
  - Ensure that the supervising veterinarian has the resources needed for oversight of euthanasia.
  - Provide veterinarian oversight of staff training, skill, performance, and evaluation in addition to the use and recordkeeping of controlled substances.
2. Transfer all sedation and euthanasia drugs from the contract veterinarian's office to the shelter.
  - The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) licenses ADDRESSES where drugs are stored, not the physical address of the veterinarian's business.
  - It is imperative that all drug usage is properly documented as it is purchased, used and verify remaining amounts.
  - Establish written protocols for drug storage, usage and documentation. Sample drug logs are included in this report.
3. Develop a comprehensive written euthanasia protocol to correct items that are not in accordance with current guidelines for humane euthanasia or that are incomplete.
  - Include a section on mandatory microchip scanning using the proper technique (see Resources) and what action to take if a chip is identified. For fractious animals that cannot be safely scanned, sedate and scan prior to euthanasia. Record the scan results in the animal's computerized medical record.
  - Establish a written pre-euthanasia sedation protocol (see Resources).
    - Acepromazine or xylazine used alone are inadequate, especially for fearful or aggressive dogs. In addition, xylazine induces vomiting which can cause choking and suffocation.
    - A ketamine/xylazine cocktail administered IM is preferred for pre-euthanasia sedation.
    - Record drugs and doses in the animal's computerized medical record.
  - Require that all animals be weighed to ensure that an accurate dose of pre-euthanasia sedative and euthanasia solution is administered. Put a scale in or near the room. The weight should be recorded in the animal's computerized medical record.
  - A high level of technical proficiency and use of proper animal restraint will help ensure that standard doses are adequate for humane euthanasia and exceptions are minimized. Sedation before injection and shaving hair over the venipuncture site will also enable accurate injection site location and aspiration to determine needle placement before injection.
  - Include an approved approach for confirmation of death (see Resources).
    - Cardiac puncture can be performed after the animal is unconscious and has no reflex when toes are pinched. A syringe with a needle long enough to reach and penetrate the heart muscle is inserted into the animal's chest cavity and heart. Proper location can be determined by aspirating blood into the syringe. If the heart is beating normally, the syringe typically moves in a circular motion or up/down and back/forth motion. If the heart is fibrillating, the syringe typically moves back/forth only. Once movement completely ceases, or if no movement is detected, the animal is dead.
    - Appropriate use of a stethoscope: place the drum of the stethoscope on the animal's chest in the proper location, and verify death by total lack of heartbeat and respiration sounds. Train staff in the effective use of a stethoscope for chest auscultation.
  - Include a section on cleaning and disinfection of the euthanasia room.
  - Post the protocol in the euthanasia room.

4. Establish a documented review process to ensure that staff follow established protocols and training in all aspects of euthanasia (animal handling, dosage, route of administration, documentation, etc.).
  - Provide annual performance reviews and evaluation of skills to ensure ongoing proficiency.
  - Consider including an audit of records to review drug amounts given for appropriateness to the animal's recorded weight and routes of administration.
5. The following supplies should be available in the euthanasia room:
  - Treats
  - Several muzzles of varying sizes
  - Clippers and blades for shaving for better visualization of the cephalic or saphenous veins
  - Extra towels and blankets
  - Weighing scale
  - Dedicated mop, mop bucket, and disinfectant
6. It is inhumane for animals to be euthanized in a room where dead animals are visible. This practice can induce anxiety and should be stopped immediately.
  - Consider installing a curtain along the far end of the room to move euthanized animals behind so that they are hidden from view of incoming animals.
7. Euthanize mother animals **prior** to their offspring. Puppies and kittens should be euthanized immediately following the mother.
8. Sufficient time must be allowed for the performance of humane euthanasia in order to insure adequate animal welfare and safety of the staff.
  - For safety and efficiency, establish a policy that all euthanasia procedures are to be performed by 2 staff members.
    - This will allow adequate time and focus to perform euthanasia procedures and related recordkeeping.
    - Staff performing euthanasia should only assist other staff if and when all euthanasia-related duties are completed.
  - The euthanasia staff should not be interrupted under any circumstances during the euthanasia procedure.
    - Post a highly visible sign on the euthanasia room door stating "Do Not Enter - Euthanasia in Progress".
    - Notify all staff members of this policy - no exceptions
9. Institute management practices to minimize staff stress. These practices include rotation of staff performing euthanasia, flexibility for staff to opt-out of euthanizing particular animals, and prominently posted Employee Assistance Program materials.
10. Obtain a licensed vendor for the proper disposal of sharps containers. Check with the health Department to see who they use. It is also possible to establish a partnership with the Health Department so that disposal will be at little or no cost.
11. Provide resources for staff on compassion fatigue and where they can access help, if needed. Make all personnel aware of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Another possibility is to implement an annual workshop on compassion fatigue for shelter staff and invite surrounding agencies.

## **Organizational Management and Record Keeping**

Management and record keeping encompasses the establishment of policies and protocols, management structure, staff training, animal identification and record keeping. According to the ASV Guidelines, "...organizations must have a clearly defined mission; policies and protocols that reflect current information; adequate staff training and supervision; and proper management of animal care... Organizational functioning, employee health and well-being, and animal wellness are inextricably linked."

(Caveat: The consultant realizes that many changes have already been made, but they need to be documented, nonetheless.)

### **Observations**

1. The Board of Commissioners and the Chief Administrative Officer are open to new strategies and are willing make changes as necessary in support for the Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare program.
2. The County was proactive and open to recruiting for the Director position utilizing national animal welfare web sites.
3. All employees and others outside of the shelter have expressed a desire to create a high functioning animal welfare program and to implement changes as necessary to increase the live release rate of the shelter as well as public perception.
4. Work is disproportionately allocated across team. Additionally, staff could be more effective if authorized more discretion and by being able to handle minor issues rather than immediately elevating them to management for resolution. Tasks could be more organized and therefore provide for more individual accountability.
5. A clear, concise, organized management structure is needed:
  - Authority and responsibility must be given to only those who have the appropriate knowledge and training.
  - Inconsistencies exist with policies and procedures and between what on site management says and what staff is actually doing.
6. Limited education is provided for the public adopting animals or at the time of animal surrender. It would be beneficial to add focus on creating better pet owners through the process.
7. Policies facilitate the creation of unwanted animals by providing/renting traps with no education or responsibility to the finder.
  - Trapping program is problematic.
  - The shelter has no per person limits on daily stray intake.
8. There is no organization or structure for staff and management training and training is not routinely offered or repeated.
  - Staff is receptive to training and there is an expressed interest in receiving mutual training with other organizations.

- There is a clear desire by the shelter staff to do the best job possible and continuously improve.
- There are currently no requirements or scheduled continuing education provided for staff and management (other than the euthanasia certification).

9. Work is disorganized and could be more efficient. Employees at times have opportunity to accomplish more. However with only 2 – 3 staff working at any time, in person conversations are interrupted by phone calls. Safety is also compromised.
10. Staff spent a significant amount of time on their cell phones and on the Internet.
11. Staff regularly and frequently left the building without anyone's knowledge, especially at the end of the work shift. It is a common courtesy to tell your co-workers that they are the last one in the building and need to lock-up. This is a safety issue.

## **Recommendations-Organizational Management and Record Keeping**

1. Develop and document protocols sufficient in detail to achieve and maintain the minimum ASV standards. Update as needed to ensure that they reflect current information and pertinent legislation.
2. Ensure all staff (and volunteers as needed) have access to up-to-date protocols.
3. Vacant positions are in the process of being filled, which will help alleviate the workload on staff and ultimately result in better care of the animals and more adoptions. *(There were unfilled positions at the time of the evaluation. Consultant recommended a reorganization of the authorized positions. When fully staffed, the operation will improve greatly.).*
4. Organize a clearly defined structure that outlines accountability, responsibility, and authority for management within the organization is essential and must be communicated to all staff and volunteers.
5. Discontinue cat trap rental program.
6. Establish an allowance of incoming cats per person, per day.
7. Create public awareness (educational) documents explaining the adoption/intake practices, policies and general information.
8. Improve adoption application and process, to include an educational component.
9. Provide structured and organized initial training and continued ongoing training to all staff.
10. Clearly define roles and responsibilities for staff and management positions.
11. Create an organized chart that contains daily schedules with ordered tasks to minimize disruption, create efficiency and a clear accountability of what tasks are required by what staff.

12. Provide specific training on the following topics (more specific training suggestions are listed throughout this document):

- Breed identification
- Determining age and sex of cats and dogs
- Behavior assessment (through ASPCA or other organization)
- Animal behavior, body language and handling (canine & feline)
- Customer service
- Shelter population management
- Disease recognition and management

13. Instruct staff to notify the front desk staff when they are leaving and when they will return.

## Animal Identification and Record Keeping

### Observations

1. Animal records are often unclear, not completely filled out, and missing important information, both on the hard copy cards and in Chameleon. Euthanasia reasons were not always documented in animal records.
2. Many kennels and cages with animals did not have a kennel card or had incorrect cards.
3. Identification was not always physically affixed to the animal (especially with cats).
4. Dog kennels were not identified properly. If an animal was in L16, you had to look on both sides of the kennel to find it. This creates room for error as it makes difficult to identify which animal is in which location.
5. Daily inventories were often inaccurate.
6. Staff did not always look for, report or identify inaccuracies.
7. Staff frequently put incorrect information in Chameleon. This resulted in at least two (2) wrong animals being euthanized during the time the consultant was on site.
8. Animals are frequently, if not daily, moved to new quarters and not updated in Chameleon.
9. There are several changes that need to be made to better report accurate shelter statistics.
10. The hand-produced monthly reports do not match the information in Chameleon. (*Consultant compared both reports for January-June 2012. There were errors on all reports.*)
11. Pending spay-neuter surgeries for all adopted animals are not being documented in Chameleon.
12. Completed spay/neuter surgeries are not always captured in Chameleon as a part of the animal's record.
13. Animals on medications are not documented in Chameleon and rarely on the hard copy.
14. While most all staff knows the basics of Chameleon, they are not all trained in "outcoming" animals, especially adoptions and redemption in which money is collected.
15. Staff is not using Chameleon to document field service calls.
16. In order for animals available for adoption to show up on Petfinder or Pet Harbor, the record must be changed in Chameleon from "Stray Wait" to "Available". This is not being done.

## Recommendations-Animal Identification and Record Keeping

1. Implement recordkeeping SOPs.
2. Train staff on proper recordkeeping protocols.
3. Ensure that staff brings to the supervisor's attention any discrepancies in the daily inventory. Fix the inventory with accurate information.
4. Individually identify each pet with its unique number, including puppies and kittens.
5. Introduce basic Asilomar Accords for animal categorization and transparency as part of community coalition development.
6. Standardize labels in Chameleon for better and more accurate reports. Use these reports as the "monthly reports", thus reducing the workload of office staff. (*See Chameleon changes recommended at the end of this report under forms and protocols.*)
7. Assign staff to check the daily inventories and to change an animal's status so that it shows available for adoption.
8. Provide refresher courses and/or comprehensive training for all staff in Chameleon. Chameleon staff is available to train on-site. The operation relies on accurate statistics for grant and funding opportunities.
9. Start using Chameleon for tracking requests for service (Field Operations).
10. Document pending and completed spay-neuter surgeries for all adopted animals in Chameleon. Using the "follow-up" reports, document when the surgery is performed.
11. Document medications and treatments in Chameleon. Use the follow-up report to ensure animals are being medicated.
12. Contact Petfinder.com to change the name from City of Macon Animal Control Department to MBCAW. When this has been set up, change Shelter information for a more polished and professional look. *Note: The woman who keeps the On Borrowed Time Facebook page also has access to this page and had been the only one uploading animals. However, they are not properly uploading.)*

### **Corrective Actions Taken during Consultant's visit:**

- *Kennels were renumbered to reflect 1-17 on one side and 20-36 on the other.*
- *Consultant recommended (and still recommends that males be placed on one side and females on the other. Some staff was reluctant to follow this process and still placed animals in incorrect kennels.*
- *Zip-lock clear bags and "O" rings were purchased to place the kennel cards on each cage in a manner that they will not get wet. When the animal leaves, the plastic bags are to be discarded for better disease transmission prevention.*
- *Chameleon was set up so that all adoptable animals now show on Petfinder but there are too many links on the page so the information is not properly uploading. Once changes are made, it should work well, avoiding duplications in effort.*

## Housing

In the past, traditional shelters were designed as temporary holding facilities for stray dogs that only spent the typical legally mandated holding time at a shelter. Dogs were kept in long rows of kennels, which were deafeningly noisy from barking and clanging of metal bowls, gates, and doors. Noise, crowding, and constant visual stimulation created considerable stress on dogs; group-housing often caused fights, bullying, and competition for food.

However, today we are more aware of the many stressors that dogs encounter in an animal shelter, and proper shelter design guidelines and recommendations for housing that will mitigate stress on shelter dogs have been developed.

According to the ASV Guidelines, “Shelters must provide an environment that is conducive to maintaining animal health. Facilities must be appropriate for the species, the number of animals receiving care and the expected length of stay in order to ensure physical and psychological well-being of the animals. The design should provide for proper separation of animals by health status, age, gender, species, temperament, and predator-prey status, and include sufficient space for the shelter operations described in this document (intake, examination, holding, adoption, isolation, treatment, food storage, laundry, and when necessary, euthanasia)... Primary enclosures must provide sufficient space to allow each animal, regardless of species, to make normal postural adjustments, e.g., to turn freely and to easily stand, sit, stretch, move their head, without touching the top of the enclosure, lie in a comfortable position with limbs extended, move about and assume a comfortable posture for feeding, drinking, urinating and defecating...Primary enclosures should allow animals to see out but should also provide at least some opportunity to avoid visual contact with other animals...A primary enclosure must allow animals to sit, sleep and eat away from areas of their enclosures where they defecate and urinate.”

*Caveat: This shelter is what it is...an older building that has not been kept in a good state of repair over the years. The recent dedication of \$3 million in SPLOST funds to build a shelter in the next two years will remedy much of the deficiencies.*

### Housing units should:

- Allow each dog sufficient space to freely stand up, lie down, move about, and stretch out without having any part of its body (e.g. ears, tail) touch the walls or ceiling).
- Allow each dog to assume a comfortable position for eating and sleeping, and to urinate and defecate away from eating and sleeping areas.
- Provide some opportunity to view the surroundings but also provide some escape from visual contact with other dogs.
- Be constructed of a durable, solid, non-porous material that is easily disinfected
- Have room for bedding or a soft resting bench. This is important for warmth and comfort, and is essential for geriatric or arthritic dogs.
- Allow in ample amounts of natural light and fresh air.

- Have adequate drainage, which ideally should be inside the primary enclosure rather than in a common aisle way, for disease control purposes.
- Be as large as is practical, with individual “real life” rooms the best option.

**The shelter building should:**

- Include separate isolation areas, each with separate air circulation, for incoming dogs or dogs whose health status is unknown, and for dogs who are ill. Canine respiratory pathogens for example are easily transmitted by air, and gastrointestinal pathogens are easily transmitted by direct contact or foot traffic.
- Allow separation of animals by neuter status, age, behavior, and medical needs.
- Allow dogs to be housed individually, unless they are a dam with pups, littermates, come from the same household and are known to get along with each other, or are part of a planned and closely monitored group housing enrichment program.
- Be constructed of durable materials that are easy to clean and readily disinfect
- Have a foot traffic pattern that encourages cleaning and routine movement that minimizes walking from areas housing sick animals to areas housing healthy animals.
- Be constructed in a way to minimize noise. This includes choice of less noisy materials for enclosures, doors, and latches; use of sound-absorbent materials in walls and ceilings; location of noise-producing machinery as far as possible from animal housing areas.
- Include indoor and outdoor training and exercise areas.

**Dog Housing**

**Observations**

1. The majority of the dog housing only used one side of the double-sided runs. Double compartment housing provides dogs with separation of their sleeping/feeding/resting area from their elimination area. Double compartment housing also provides staff with a safe and efficient way to provide daily care needs without handling dogs. Keeping dog handling minimized during the time of routine daily care (cleaning/feeding) is important for an efficient care process as well as a healthy population by reducing the risk of disease transmission.
2. Many of the dogs were provided with elevated beds. The beds, however, were not disinfected between dogs.
3. There are several cracks in the flooring in the kennel areas. These cracks can harbor pathogens, insects and make effective cleaning and disinfection more difficult (see more under Sanitation).
4. There is no true dog isolation to house dogs with infectious diseases.

5. Standing water was noted in the kennels and walkways. Standing water can act as an environment for germs and infectious diseases to thrive and grow. If standing water contains high concentrations of disinfectants, such as bleach, it can also act as an irritant to paw pads and can be harmful if ingested.
6. One source if the standing water was from the automatic watering system, which was old and outdated. The system ran 24/7, creating a moist environment to attract roaches and other pests. According to the *Association of Shelter Veterinarians*, "Automatic watering devices and water bottles should not be used if they cannot be disinfected before being used by another animal." (Note: *The system was removed by the consultant, who received unwarranted criticism from several "animal people" for removing the only "modern device" at the shelter. The removal of the system was lauded by the Department of Agriculture.*)
7. Feces from the outdoor runs were hosed adjacent to the fence without proper drainage. The feces were piled between the run fence and the perimeter fence. This acts as a high risk for disease transmission between animals. The fence between adult and juvenile animals is also connected, allowing dogs to have direct contact. This acts as another means for disease transmission between dogs.
8. There are several stainless steel cages that are not usable due to their state of disrepair.

### **Recommendations-Dog Housing**

1. Allocate 2 or 3 of the kennel runs to be used as double sided runs for larger dogs and/or animals coming from the same household.
2. Discard all old, damaged raised dog beds and replace with new raised beds that are easy to clean and disinfect. Consider the shelter donation program through Kuranda at <http://kuranda.com/>
3. Repair all cages and kennels that are broken to increase housing capacity.
4. Install UV lights that eliminate infectious diseases in the HVAC system. (Note: Contact information was given to Buildings and Facilities some time ago. The recommended vendor is PetAirapy.com)
5. Remove—and stop using—the slatted flooring in the stainless steel cages. Not only are they unsafe for puppies and kittens, they harbor disease when not cleaned properly.
6. Ensure all standing water is removed from all kennels before placing dogs in the kennels.
7. Clean up the outside area by removing as much old fecal matter as possible. Do not use the outside runs for housing, unless in the case of an emergency (as stated by the Department of Agriculture).

## Cat Housing

### Observations

1. Cats are housed in an area of the shelter that is not free from excess noise, including barking dogs. New environments, unfamiliar faces and noises, new animal companions and overcrowding contribute to emotional stress, which plays a major role in the spread of disease in shelters. An animal that is stressed has a lowered resistance to illness, and this can lead to epidemics of infectious disease.
2. Several cages in the adoption area had raised perches, which allowed cats to sit on top. Cats instinctively feel safer when at an elevated position and having the option to perch can minimize feline stress in a shelter environment. These elevated beds also give cats the opportunity to distance themselves from feeding and toileting areas.
3. Some adoption cages were multi-level, giving cats vertical and horizontal space. Cats prefer to spend more time on raised surfaces and high structures than on the floor.
4. Cats deemed fearful or "feral" were housed in the smaller stainless steel cages. Staff preferentially chose to place cats in these smaller cages, as they felt that cats were more comfortable in smaller cages rather than larger cages.
5. Many individual cat housing cages in cat holding were too small. Providing cats with enough space to make postural adjustments, e.g., to turn freely and to easily stand, sit, stretch, and move their head without touching the top of the enclosure; lie in a comfortable position with limbs extended; move about the assume comfortable posture for feeding, drinking, urinating and defecating is needed. Additionally separation between food, resting and elimination areas should be maximized.
6. Cats are not provided a place to hide; cats were seen attempting to hide behind their litter pans and bedding. Cats are instinctively more stressed when denied the opportunity to hide which compromises welfare and can lead to illness.
7. Bedding provided in some of the cat cages are small disposable pads. Cats housed in the current holding area were provided with only a disposable pad as bedding (no floor cover provided).

### Recommendations-Cat Housing

1. Provide adequate floor space in all cat housing areas. Improve housing to allow cats to express their normal behaviors and for separation of eating, elimination, and resting areas. Increased cage size for individual cat housing is ideal.
2. Fearful and feral cats should be provided with a hiding box to help alleviate stress as well as protect staff during cleaning and feeding. Cat dens, such as the one in the photo below, are a reusable option for providing appropriate hiding space for fearful or feral cats which can also be used to transport cats and can be closed during cleaning, to protect staff. (*Note: Several were ordered prior to the Consultant's departure. We have been told, however, that the ACO's said they were to be used in their trucks, not the shelter. This is incorrect.*)



*Feral Cat Den*

3. For increasing floor space in individual smaller cages, cages can be remodeled. Two cages can be connected with a pass through portal to allow one cat access to two cages, thereby doubling the floor space for each cat. Although this can be achieved in several different ways one method is the use of a pass through made of PVC pipe (see Resources)
4. To improve floor space in existing cages, use raised beds/perches. Raised beds are an excellent immediate improvement you can make to the small cage housing you currently having in feline holding. Raised beds will improve the amount of usable floor space, meet some needs for elevated place and can be modified to provide hiding space by draping a towel over the bed.
5. House adoptable strays in the adoption room. These cats can wait out their stray hold while being available to be viewed by the public. This will allow adoptable animals to be adopted faster, reducing length of stay.
6. House only less adoptable stray cats (including fearful, etc.) in the cat holding room. Do not house sick cats or other species in this area (to avoid cross-contamination).
7. Provide all cats with the option to hide. Hiding is a natural coping mechanism for cats and providing cats with a place to hide is important as they acclimate to a shelter environment. Allowing cats the ability to hide gives them some control over their environment which reduces stress levels. Because some of the current cat housing is too small to accommodate hiding boxes inside the cages, cage covers can be used to provide hiding space for each cage. A partial cage cover is recommended to allow easy visualization of cats by staff as well as provide cats with additional choice of being seen or not. Another inexpensive option is to collect shoe boxes and place one in each cage. When the boxes get soiled or the cats leave, discard. The box can go with an adopted cat.
8. Provide all cats with proper bedding (i.e. a thick towel) and a litter box. Using the larger cages and replacing the 2ft x 2ft cages will allow enough room for bedding and a litter box.
9. Kittens should be housed only with litter mates. Mixing litters of kittens should be avoided to prevent disease transmission.

## **Facilities-Other Areas**

### **Observations**

1. Overall the shelter/office areas were not being properly cleaned and had animal odor. This improved over time.
2. Cleaning tools and supplies are frequently left in the lobby by staff/volunteers.
3. The lobby currently serves as the area for both adopters and people relinquishing animals. Having both types of clients in the same area of the lobby can create an unsettling environment, especially for potential adopters.
4. The shelter lobby area was cluttered. It is difficult for clients to absorb the right information and without organization and purposeful displays. There is a missed opportunity for the shelter to reinforce license value and service as well as client education as appropriate signage. (*Note: much of this has been corrected.*)
5. The front doors of the shelter were always locked. Visitors had to be “buzzed in.” (*Note: This has been remedied by disconnecting the buzzer and unlocking the door.*)

### **Recommendations-Other Areas**

1. Continue to keep the lobby organized and free from cleaning materials and supplies.
2. Inspire the value of MBCAW through positive, professional signage posted throughout the shelter.
3. Provide an educational display about the benefits of adopting and a resource center for services provided both within MBCAW and in the community.

## Behavior and Mental Health Well Being

According to the ASV Guidelines, “Good health and well-being depend on meeting both the mental and behavioral needs, as well as the physical needs, of animals. Individual animals have a wide variety of psychological needs that are determined by such factors as species, genetic makeup, personality, prior socialization and experience. Behavioral care must take the perspective of each individual animal into consideration as well as the conditions experienced by the population...Lack of control over one’s environment is one of the most profound stressors for animals. The stress induced by even short-term confinement in an animal shelter can compromise health; and when confined long-term, animals frequently suffer due to chronic anxiety, social isolation, inadequate mental stimulation and lack of physical exercise...Proper behavioral healthcare is essential to exercise...Proper behavioral healthcare is essential to reduce stress and suffering as well as to detect problem behaviors that may pose a safety risk to humans or other animals.”

Any animal that is observed to be experiencing mental suffering, distress or behavioral deterioration must be assessed and appropriately treated in a timely manner or humanely euthanized. Just as a severe or rapid decline in an animal’s physical health constitutes an emergency situation and requires an urgent response, so do such changes in the behavioral or mental health of an animal.

Enrichment should also be provided for animals while in their enclosures through opportunities for play (e.g., toys or human interaction). Feeding enrichment is another important source of stimulation and can be easily accomplished by hiding food in commercially available food puzzle toys, cardboard boxes, or similar items with holes such that the animal has to work to extract pieces of food.

Feeding enrichment has also been shown to increase activity level and reduce barking behavior. Other forms of mental and sensory stimulation (e.g., olfactory, visual, auditory, tactile and pheromone) are additional and important ways of providing enrichment. For example, cats benefit from the provision of scratching posts/pads; dogs benefit from the provision of items to chew and may also benefit from classical music played at controlled volumes or certain aromas (such as chamomile or lavender). Animals may also benefit from visual stimulation and the ability to observe their surroundings.

For long-term shelter stays, appropriate levels of additional enrichment must be provided on a daily basis. Long-term confinement of any animal, including feral or aggressive animals, which cannot be provided with basic care, daily enrichment and exercise without inducing stress, is unacceptable.

When in homes, most dogs are able to enjoy cuddling, playing, sniffing, eating treats, going for walks, visiting with people and dogs, and learning new things. Although all shelters must provide dogs with food, water, and shelter, it is also important to provide them with social interaction, mental stimulation, and the exercise that they need. The enrichment programs described in this section will help fulfill these basic needs. Remember, not all dogs are the same, and each one will prefer to do different activities.

## **Observations-Dogs**

1. The shelter has two (2) outdoor yards for the dogs but they were not used for play or socialization.
2. The shelter has a volunteer group that walks dogs. Toward the end of the consultant's visit, several volunteers chose not to come to the shelter after the resignation of one of the employees.
3. There are no measures taken to reduce stress on dogs upon entering the shelter environment.
4. The shelter does not provide any kennel enrichment for the dogs. There were no visible toys in the kennels and soft bedding was rarely provided.
5. Staff and volunteers did not give the dogs treats on a regular basis.
6. There is no mechanism in place for dogs to have a behavioral evaluation.
7. There was no consistent behavioral monitoring system in place to monitor canine behavior daily. There was also no method or procedure for staff to identify or report behavioral problems and no system in place to track behavioral wellbeing or address behavioral concerns when they arose.
8. Staff was observed using improper dog handling methods when dealing with dogs. They were observed grabbing collars to move dogs in and out of kennels and using "catch poles" to move dogs that were not aggressive.
9. Shelter dogs receive no basic obedience training during their stay in the shelter. Staff was unaware of what methods volunteers were using when working with the shelter dogs and were not knowledgeable themselves on acceptable methods of dog training.

## **Recommendations-Dogs**

1. The large outside yards to the rear of the shelter should be utilized for play/exercise. For example, when cleaning kennels, dogs should be placed in this area while their kennels are being cleaned. This accomplished the objectives of play as well as proper sanitation, i.e. not cleaning the kennels while dogs are in them.
2. Receive proper training on behavioral assessment. One such program is the SAFER test available through DVD's and booklets or by arranging training from the ASPCA. A DVD by Dr. Sophia Yin entitled "Low Stress Handling of Dogs and Cats" is also an excellent tool.
3. Monitoring canine behavioral health should be incorporated into daily rounds as part of assessing the overall health and wellbeing of each dog in the shelter. This will ensure behavioral problems are recognized early and protocols are developed to address solutions for correction of behavioral issues.
4. Establish an organized enrichment program into daily canine care. Including positive experiences as well as enrichment and social interactions into the daily routine can reduce daily stress in the shelter.
5. Purchase soft slip leashes with a handle that are safe for staff and inmates to use when handling and moving dogs. (*This purchase was arranged by the consultant prior to departure.*)
6. Use enrichment toys, such as Kong toys, in kennels for both cats and dogs. (*Kong offers a drawing for free KONGS for shelters each month or you can purchase Kong toys second hand for a discount. See <http://www.kongcompany.com/pet-partner-programs> for more information.*)
7. Research other ways to provide enrichment in the shelter.
8. Train staff to be aware of positive reinforcement dog training. Organize a demo training session with local trainers for staff.
9. Increase volunteer involvement with training classes and enrichment for shelter dogs
10. Train staff to think about kennel stress and to map which kennels are more stressful than others.

11. Use visual barriers (such as shower curtains or sheets) to relieve stress and reduce barking and lunging at the barrier.
12. Train staff on body language.
13. If possible, look into alternative calming options such as music especially designed for dogs and cats, aromatherapy, Flower Essences, Adaptil D.A.P. and Feliway. All can be purchased online. Some are relatively inexpensive (CD's, Flower Essences and aromatherapy). These items can be placed on a shelter wish list or donated by volunteers.

## **Observations-Cats**

1. There were minimal to no measures taken to reduce acute stress on cats entering the shelter or while under care.
2. There were no steps taken to reduce stress on intake and cats deemed feral or fearful were placed in the holding area.
3. Cats are not routinely provided a place to hide in any of the holding, isolation or adoption rooms. Cats were seen attempting to hide behind their litter pans and bedding. Cats are instinctively more stressed when denied the opportunity to hide which compromises welfare and can lead to illness.
4. Cat cages were not cleaned daily nor were they cleaned adequately. This causes a large amount of undue stress on cats and can cause deterioration of behavioral wellbeing as well as overall health.
5. There was a lack of staff recognition of feline body language and signs of stress and fear. Staff was not trained on how to recognize feline body language and was often unable to recognize feline body language and interpreted it incorrectly. They were unable to correctly identify cats based on behavior resulting in frequent inappropriate designation of fearful or stressed cats as feral.
6. There was no consistent behavioral monitoring system in place to monitor feline behavior daily. There was also no method or procedure for staff to identify or report behavioral problems and no system in place to track behavioral wellbeing or address behavioral concerns when they arose.
7. The shelter does not have an enrichment program for felines. Enrichment is required for stress reduction beginning at intake. Additional levels of enrichment become increasingly important as length of stay increases.
8. Stress and length of stay both predispose cats to upper respiratory infection, further compromising wellbeing.
9. Cats were frequently housed in cages too small for their length of stay. For example, mother cats and kittens and litters of kittens were housed in cages designed to hold only one cat.
10. Cats and dogs for adoption are held in the same room. This provides a high stress environment (mainly from barking dogs), which is not beneficial for a cat's behavioral and mental wellbeing as well as beneficial in improving health.
11. There are two (2) larger cages (cat condos) that typically housed kittens but were not frequently used as staff said they were too hard to clean
12. There is not a consistent group of volunteers to spend time handling the cats and providing social interaction and enrichment.

## Recommendations-Cats

1. Repair all cages which are broken. There are two (2) larger cages in the cat room that cannot be used because they need minor repairs.
2. Implement measures to reduce feline stress on intake and during their stay in the shelter.
3. Utilize larger cages in the holding room and use cat "dens" or provide other hiding boxes for all cats.  
*(Feral cat boxes (dens) were ordered by the consultant before departure. We learned the ACO's were using them in their trucks. The ACO's should be using transfer cage, not the feral boxes.)*
4. Improve feline housing to allow cats to express their normal behaviors. All cats, in both holding and adoption housing should be provided with a hiding option, which can be as simple as a shoe box.  
*(Contact a local discount shoe box and ask that boxes be saved for the cats. An ACO or volunteer can pick them up.)*
5. Do not move cats to a new cage during daily cleaning. Instead, implement a spot cleaning protocol and only move cats to a new cage when moving them to a different location within the shelter (i.e. from holding to adoption). Transfer cages can also be used to hold the cat while the cage is cleaned.  
Transfer cages must be disinfected after each use before placing another cat in it.
6. Train staff in recognition of feline body language as well as how to properly identify and describe feline behaviors. Many cats entering the shelter will show signs of fear, and it can be difficult at first to differentiate fearful tame cats from truly feral cats. Provide hands on training in recognizing feline body language and proper feline identifications. This can be accomplished by setting up feline body language training sessions with local veterinarians or behaviorists who have an interest in feline behavior.
7. Train staff on proper feline handling that minimizes feline stress. Proper feline handling is crucial in both reducing feline stress as well as ensuring staff safety.
8. Implement a feline behavioral health monitoring system into daily rounds. Monitoring feline behavioral health should be incorporated into daily rounds as part of assessing the overall health and wellbeing on each cat in the shelter. This will ensure behavioral problems are recognized early and protocols are developed to address solutions for correction of behavioral issues.
9. Establish an organized consistent daily enrichment program into daily feline care and keep a recorded enrichment log for each cat. Including positive experiences as well as enrichment and social interactions into the daily routine can reduce feline stress in the shelter. Using a volunteer-based program is a great way to ensure cats receive frequent and routine enrichment and socialization.
10. Consider using larger kennels to house "feral" cats or those that cannot be safely handled. This helps create a less stressful environment for the cats. It also allows for easier maneuvering when tools such as nets are needed to be used.

## Community Outreach

### Observations

1. The MBCAW shelter is located in a low-traffic area with little visibility. This is a hindrance to attracting adopters and volunteers.
2. There are several highly motivated volunteers interested in assisting with daily care and outside adoption events.
3. Life-saving capacity is enhanced by a small, but vocal, group of community volunteers doing pet rescue work. There is a strong relationship with several of the rescues. This provides an opportunity for diverting under-aged puppies and kittens into private homes, increasing socialization at a critical age, and reducing exposure to infectious diseases.
4. Currently, there is not a clear or inviting process for potential adopters to follow when they arrive.
  - Visitors were observed unassisted in the lobby for several minutes while personnel in the understaffed reception area were occupied by other tasks. Once in the kennels it is not easy to determine what dogs are available for adoption and what the procedure is to meet a dog or to begin the adoption process.
  - Signage and educational materials in the reception and kennel areas appeared haphazard, cluttered, and outdated. *(Note: With the painting of the front lobby/office space, this has been corrected.)*
5. Understaffing of the reception area made it impossible to reliably answer the phone. This may lead to lost opportunities to encourage adoptions and return lost pets to their owners.
6. A volunteer presently goes to the shelter on a weekly basis to photograph animals and post them on a Facebook page, established exclusively for MBCAW pets. This page, On Borrowed Time, reaches all area rescue groups.
7. We commend MBCAW for posting a list of impounded animals on its website. However, many animals, especially cats, do not have pictures, which may impede reunification of lost animals with owners and the potential for missed adoption opportunities.
8. A program to transfer dogs from MBCAW to nonprofit shelters and rescue groups increases the opportunity for live release.
  - A climate of mutual distrust exists between some shelter staff and some rescue groups, and among the rescue groups themselves.
  - Previous infectious disease issues have made some rescues reluctant to transfer animals.
  - Some community stakeholders have resorted to rescuing homeless dogs from other area counties. Not only does this approach fail to save an animal impounded at MBCAW, but it also fills a pet vacancy in a local home that could have saved a dog or cat originating from Bibb County.
  - Transfers were frequently encouraged only after the shelter announced an increase in euthanasia.
  - Some shelter staff expressed concern that rescue groups often selected only the most adoptable dogs, leaving less attractive dogs, particularly pit bulls, behind. Staff felt that this created the impression with the public that the shelter was not a place where highly desirable dogs could be found for adoption. Several staff voiced the opinion that the shelter should be given an

- opportunity to adopt dogs before they were made available for transfer.
- Some rescues are reportedly unreliable and fail to transfer animals in a timely manner after claiming them. This occupies kennel space that should be made available for other animals.
- Public support for admitting animals and holding them indefinitely for adoption is inconsistent with the fixed capacity of the shelter. Protracted length-of-stay in small cages or kennels designed for short-term housing and crowding multiple animals together in single kennels increases stress, reduces welfare, and facilitates disease outbreaks.
- The current approach to transfers is undermining the life-saving capacity of the rescue groups. They are all full, too.

9. There were no “off-site” adoption events of MBCAW animals.

10. There are no written protocols or requirements for volunteers at the shelter.

11. The county’s ITS department is to be commended for the great work they accomplished on the County’s web site for the Animal Welfare department. It is easy to navigate and looks professional. Whenever I requested a change, it was completed in a very short amount of time. In my opinion, they provided great “customer service.”

## Recommendations-Community Outreach

- Develop a cadre of volunteers to focus on off-site adoption opportunities to increase the adoption rate and promote MBCAW programs.
  - This should include PetSmart, especially with Bibb County receiving a PetSmart Charities grant). (*Note: It appears that “Macon Animal Control” was a member of the PetSmart on-site adoption program. It is an easy process to change the name to MBCAW.*)
  - Develop special themed adoption events, such as Mardi Gras, Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, etc.
  - Pursue other in-store adoption locations.
  - Have adoptions at community events such as “Mulberry Market.”
  - Purchase “Adopt Me” vests for dogs to wear in the community.
- To adequately provide for this program, additional supplies dedicated for this program will need to be purchased or donated. They include water bowls, folding crates of various sizes and 2-3 canopies for shade when outside. These items can be listed on the “Want List” developed by ITS and placed on the web site for donations.
- Participate in community events to increase public awareness of the shelter. These could include everything from neighborhood fairs to participating in the Cherry Blossom Festival Parade, even if it is only a (clean) vehicle in the parade.
- Celebrate industry events and provide publicity/press releases to the media.
  - Events could include Adopt a Dog Month, Adopt a Cat Month, etc.
- Expand the transfer program.
  - Recruit additional transfer partners, including breed rescues.
  - Build on the Open Selection system to allow transfer partners (and adopters) to pre-select animals during the required hold period
  - Initiate proactive transfer requests by contacting Pet Placement Partners as soon as animals arrive, particularly for purebred dogs and dogs with high adopter appeal.
  - Minimize length of stay and shelter crowding by encouraging transfer as soon as possible.

6. Owner-relinquished animals could be transferred on the day of intake and strays could be transferred at the end of the required hold period. Enhance community-wide diversion programs to avoid the need for shelter admission. Options include programs that facilitate owner retention, increase targeted spay/neuter, foster-to adopt, and others. The best shelter is a caring community.
7. Create a culture among stakeholders in which pet overpopulation and homelessness are viewed as a community issue rather than only a MBCAW issue. Ideally, MBCAW, nonprofit shelters, and transfer groups would pool their intake and disposition data to create a metric that more accurately reflects the animal welfare status of the community. When this information is transparent and shared, it can compel each participating stakeholder to contribute to the success of the community's coalition, rather than creating competition among groups for resources or stature. The sharing of both responsibility and credit throughout the community may also reduce concern about which agency is credited for the adoption of dogs that are considered most desirable. The rapid transfer and/or adoption of such pets should be viewed as equally successful, because the community stakeholders jointly created the life-saving opportunity.
8. Create a more informative and positive adopter experience.
  - Develop a more welcoming reception experience by adequately staffing the front office. Volunteers could greet visitors. (*Note: This should be corrected when the shelter is up to full staffing levels.*)
  - When shelter crowding is controlled and shelter staffing is adequate, consider implementation of adoption marketing programs such as the ASPCA's Meet Your Match.
9. Provide education to staff, volunteers, and rescue groups regarding the benefits of reducing length-of-stay in the shelter. Each unnecessary day in the shelter contributes to cost, crowding, stress, and risk of infectious diseases. For some animals, the stress of being in a shelter environment contributes to rapid psychological and behavioral deterioration. Funds recouped from adoption fees rarely offset more than a day or two of shelter care. Therefore, every effort should be made for disposition as soon as legally allowed.
10. Increase the number and efficiency of transfers to rescue groups
  - Establish a culture among staff and rescue groups that all live releases are a victory for all parties regardless of what agency eventually completes the final adoption. Transfer to rescues should be viewed as equal in stature to public adoption directly from the shelter.
  - Encourage rescues to provide adoption information so staff is aware of the positive outcomes of their efforts to work with other agencies.
  - Institute neutral language that emphasizes the partnership between MBCAW and other animal welfare groups in place of terminology that suggests "rescue" from the shelter. One such suggestion is to refer to these groups as "Pet Placement Partners."
  - Revise policies to encourage transfer to Pet Placement Partners immediately at the end of the legal hold period. Policies and procedures should facilitate transfer as soon as possible, not transfer after the shelter has invested vast resources in health care and housing.
  - Establish written policies for Pet Placement Partners to indicate their intent to transfer an animal, including how to manage multiple requests for the same animal, and to assure prompt transfer as quickly as possible.
  - Include highly adoptable animals in the transfer program in addition to those with difficult and expensive conditions.

- Encourage staff and volunteers to be proactive during the legal hold period to pre-arrange placements for animals to take place on or about the due-out date. This is especially true for animals that may be attractive to breed and other specialty groups.
- Develop proactive procedures with Pet Placement Partners to facilitate high-volume transfers on a regular recurring basis in place of the current system focusing on animals selected because of impending euthanasia.
- Assign a skilled and innovative staff member or volunteer with outstanding communication skills to serve as a liaison between the shelter and Pet Placement Partners to assure that transfer opportunities are maximized at all times. Provide access to training resources available at conferences or online to implement proven strategies for adoption marketing.
- Develop a method for keeping staff, volunteers, and the public informed of improvements in live-release rates to create buy-in for transfers and rapid dispositions.
- Re-establish relationships with former Pet Placement Partners.
- Develop detailed written policies and procedures for all aspects of the Pet Placement Partner transfer program based on successful programs at other shelters.
- Utilize a detailed and fair application, evaluation, and monitoring program for recruiting Pet Placement Partners to ensure maximum participation while also assuring humane standards for transferred animals and avoiding inadvertent involvement with animal hoarding situations.
- Survey Pet Placement Partners to identify any barriers to maximizing transfers.
- Consider transfers on day of intake for owner-relinquished animals and juvenile animals to reduce risk of infectious diseases and to control crowding and costs of housing and care.
- Encourage Pet Placement Partners to utilize the Open Selection system to pre-select animals for transfer on the due-out date. This system makes all animals in the shelter available for transfer, with the exception of dangerous animals and those with certain infectious diseases.
- Breed-specific rescue groups are also another outlet for placement of surplus or marginal animals.

11. Grant limited access to the Chameleon database to the volunteer that takes photos and posts on the "On Borrowed Time" Facebook page. By doing so, she can post her photos on Chameleon, and update the animals' names...something the present staff does not have time to accomplish.

12. Create a written policy/protocol for the expectations of the Pet Placement Partners and volunteers when dealing with county staff and issues.

- The policy should include language geared toward a "three-strikes" rule wherein they can be suspended or banned (or certain members of a group) for disruption of the shelter operations, making negative comments regarding staff and other volunteers in a public manner, etc.
- The policy should include a requirement that all animals received from MBCAW must be spayed/neutered within 30 days of transfer with confirmation sent to the shelter for inclusion in the animals' records.

13. Establish written policies/protocols and training for Volunteers, outlining what they can and cannot do, restricted areas, expectation of behavior, etc.

14. Volunteers can supplement employees by:

- Connecting prospective adopters with pets
- Linking clients with community resources
- Providing behavioral and environmental enrichment for pets in the shelter
- Training animals to help them be more adoptable
- Performing adoption outreach from remote locations
- Managing lost and found elements in the shelter

15. Purchase Volunteer T-shirts through a local Vendor or one that specializes in animals such as Austin Cotton ([www.austincotton.com](http://www.austincotton.com)). Volunteers can either purchase the shirts at cost from the County or return them to the County when they are no longer volunteering.

## Other

I would be remiss if I did not comment on an issue that deeply concerns me and the future “healing” between the County and local animal rescue groups.

This consultant, Chairman Samuel Hart, Sr., Commissioner Lonzy Edwards, and Chief Administrative Officer Steve Layson have experienced firsthand the verbal and vicious attacks put forth by some the local animal rescue groups. It was soon realized that staff members, both BoC and the shelter, were unknowingly instigating the attacks by dispersing information to local animal rescue groups without 100% factual knowledge of the situation.

Due to the passionate emotions of the community surrounding the welfare of animals, it is imperative for employees to refrain from discussing Animal Welfare issues, events, concerns, etc. with individuals not employed by the County. Failure to do so could result in a reprimand.

## Other Observations and Recommendations

The following are in no particular order. They most likely have not appeared in a previous chapter, but one or two may have.

1. Discontinue renting/loaning cat traps, except in a bite case investigation.
  - Providing cat traps isn't a government function and increases the expectation that cats should be trapped and brought to MBCAW.
  - There are many other ways to deal with feral and nuisance cats, including Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) programs.
2. Eliminate holding periods on certain animals. The recommendations below can be accomplished first by policy, and later incorporated into county ordinances.
  - Eliminate the one (1) day hold on owner surrendered animals.
    - Some agencies use this holding period just in case an owner changes their mind. As a general rule, the reasons the owner surrendered their animal will not change in 24 hours.
    - By eliminating these holds, the animal can immediately be evaluated and be adopted or transferred immediately.
  - Eliminate the "stray" holding period (7 days) on litters of puppies or kittens, with or without a mother.
    - Rarely, if ever, would an "owner" reclaim a litter of puppies or kittens found on the road or in someone's yard.
    - By eliminating the hold, the animals can immediately be evaluated on their suitability for final disposition.
    - Eliminating the hold saves on staff time, and associated feeding/cleaning costs.
    - They can still be entered in Chameleon as Stray, but change the outcome date to the same as intake and make "Available" in status.
  - Feral cats- eliminate the 7 day holding period for those cats truly deemed feral.
    - Eliminating the holding period would allow shelter staff to euthanize if necessary, thus freeing up valuable holding space in the cat areas.
3. Establish a policy for the holding, adopting and/or transferring pregnant dogs/cats
  - Allowing a pregnant animal to have her young further contributes to the community's pet overpopulation program.
  - If the dog/cat is adoptable, spay as soon as possible. After recover, put up for adoption/transfer.
  - If the dog/cat is not adoptable, the most humane thing to do it to euthanize before she has her young.

4. Utilize inmates to supplement staffing at the shelter. *(Note: We understand this may have already been put in place.)*
  - Initial plan was discussed with Sheriff-Elect, David Davis.
  - Staff should treat the inmates as “volunteers” and not criminals.
  - There will be “turn-over” with the inmates and re-training will be constant. This is no different than using community service workers.
5. Require that all animals transferred to a rescue group from the shelter be spayed/neutered by the rescue within 30 days.
  - Current Georgia law requires animals adopted from a shelter or rescue be sterilized within 30 days (if an adult and not already sterilized) or within 30 days of sexual maturity, in the case of a young animal.
  - If implemented, proof of sterilization must be sent to the shelter within 7 days of surgery.
  - Many animals released by MBCAW to rescue groups are in foster homes for significant periods of time and are not altered.
  - During the site visit, the consultant was told by one rescuer that one of their foster people could not take male dogs because she had a female foster dog that was not spayed. This is unacceptable, as accidents do happen.
  - There are some rescue groups that spay/neuter right away prior to placing in foster homes or adoption.
  - This can be accomplished first by policy, and then later incorporated in the county ordinances.
6. Charge the rescue groups “cost” for the intake core vaccinations, de-worming, flea treatment and SNAP tests (excluding routine parvovirus SNAP tests) to reduce their costs when pulling animals.
  - The rescue groups provide these vaccinations for their animals; most are done through a local veterinarian.
  - If the shelter is performing core vaccination on intake, the rescue group will not have to pay their veterinarian for these vaccines/tests.
  - According to one rescue, their veterinarian charges them \$48 for DHPP (or DA2PP) , Bordetella, rabies vaccination and heartworm SNAP test. The “at cost” pricing from the shelter would be in the range of \$12-15 for this service (except rabies).
  - By charging “cost only” to the rescues, they will save money on each animal and be able to free up their funds for other procedures/programs.
  - The rescues can either pay at the time of transfer or the shelter can invoice the rescue on a monthly basis.
7. Implement a dog/cat licensing program. \*
  - Not only will this program provide positive, visual per identification (tag), it will also provide additional revenue to the county.
  - There is a licensing component within the Chameleon system, so additional software is not needed.
  - As part of the program, require that veterinarians send to the county on a monthly basis a copy of each rabies vaccination certificate. These certificates can then be checked against the database to see if that animal is currently licensed.

8. Implement a “breeder’s permit” fee for all dog and cat breeders in the county.\*
  - Backyard breeders add to the pet overpopulation problem.
  - Many of these breeders “fly under the radar” of the Department of Agriculture’s pet dealer licensing program. The Department of Agriculture’s web site states, “If your animal has more than 1 litter in a twelve month period, you are required to obtain a pet dealer’s license.”
  - By establishing and enforcing this type of program, which also includes individual licensing of the breeder’s adult dogs/cats, many lives will be saved with the local shelters and rescues.
9. Prohibit residents from selling or giving away puppies and kittens in public places, such as at flea markets, in front of grocery stores and on street corners.
  - Many of these animals have had no veterinary care and can often be the source of diseases, such as parvovirus, in the community.
  - Many people that buy or take these animals do so on impulse. Several end up in the local animal shelters within two weeks.
10. Partner with the County’s Department of Inspection and Fees to develop an in-house citation program.\*
  - Currently, citations written by Animal Welfare are processed through the city and county courts. The county does not receive revenue from these citations.
  - The consultant briefly spoke with Tom Buttram, director of Inspection and Fees, regarding a program of this type. Mr. Buttram was researching the possibility of having the county’s own “administrative judge” for a program within his department.
  - If both departments partnered together for an “in-house citation program”, additional revenue will be realized by both departments.
11. Update the county’s ordinances and encourage the city to adopt the same ordinances.
  - Having up-to-date and easily understood ordinances will enhance the enforcement by the Animal Welfare officers.
  - The ordinances should be easily integrated and implemented when the consolidation takes place.
12. Pursue grants for programs and operational items needed.
  - Grants are available from many sources, such as the ASPCA, to government operations for a variety of programs.
  - Consider applying for a grant specifically to replace the anesthesia equipment, which is not functional. This will enable the contract veterinarian to perform spay/neuter surgeries at the shelter.

\* The items noted above with “\*” are programs that the consultant has developed for other agencies. The consultant will be happy to assist Bibb County with the development of these programs.

## **One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish**

*(aka No Kill, Low Kill, Limited Admission, Open Admission)*

This is a transitional time for the animal welfare field as growing demand for animal-friendly solutions is challenging traditional sheltering paradigms. There is an international desire to shift from a reactive animal control model in which massive numbers of animals are processed through shelters with an overall high euthanasia rate to one in which proactive preventive measures reduce shelter admissions with individualized programs tailored to different types of animals to result in higher save rates.

The term "no kill" among animal shelters is very much in vogue now, but all too often full of empty promise. The buzzword evokes good things for homeless dogs and cats and is a magnet for increased traffic and, therefore, donations to shelters that make the claim.

A "no-kill" shelter is most widely defined as an animal shelter where all adoptable and treatable animals are saved and where only unadoptable or non-rehabilitatable animals are euthanized.

The term "low kill" is not widely used in the industry. There is not a universal definition for a "low kill" shelter. Shelters using this undefined term simply means that they do all they can to place every "adoptable" animal that comes into the shelter. They do not have a time limit on an animal's stay, and an adoptable animal will not be euthanized to make room for another (i.e. time/space).

Essentially, "no kill" and "low kill" are the *same* thing (all suitable dogs will be rehomed), the only difference lies in the fates of dogs not suitable as pets.

Definition of the terms, adoptable, unadoptable and what is treatable may vary widely between organizations and this has led to criticism.

For example, some groups consider feral cats unadoptable, but others argue that the majority of outdoor cats are simply pets that have been dumped and few are truly feral. Who's to separate the free roaming domestics from the unowned and truly feral?

What does the group do with its pregnant dogs and cats? Some say if you put them down, you can't be defined as a no-kill. Others say if you let the animals be born, you are contributing to the pet overpopulation problem. Further, when those animals reach adoptable age, their placement takes away for an animal shelter adoption.

Categorizing an animal by its health status is equally uneven. Some of the best pets ever owned can't see, can't hear, have lumps and bumps, are old and/or decrepit, crippled and even incontinent, yet have been placed in happy homes with grateful owners.

The questions get harder. What does the group do with its heartworm positive dogs? (Heartworm is a very expensive to treat.) Dogs with mange and cats with ringworm (infectious to humans)? Leukemia and FIV cats? And what about the parvo dogs? That one is a challenge to the most humane of groups because it's so infectious. You're jeopardizing other dogs if they are exposed, yet a no-kill shelter will manage.

Wayne Pacelle, President and CEO of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), wrote:

"So, no kill as a philosophy is noble; no kill as an objective or aspiration is essential. Really, nothing else can be our goal. But ... and naturally, there is a 'but' here. But 'No-Kill' as an outcome cannot be universally expected to occur overnight, and it cannot succeed without multi-pronged efforts by committed communities. Its conscientious backers recognize that. It's simple mathematics. If euthanasia is not occurring and intake of dogs and cats is significantly exceeding adoptions, then overcrowding and warehousing—and the attendant suffering—are the undesirable and also unacceptable outcomes. Or if shelters close their doors to animals in need, then the problem is just being pushed off to someone or someplace else, with euthanasia the likely outcome and with the fundamental dynamics essentially left unchanged."

But many no-kill shelters have no backup plan and hang onto animals for months, sometimes years, until they are adopted, causing crowding and health problems for the animals. Not for the dog's interests, but in the interest of maintaining that "no kill" label. Shelters that "warehouse" animals fill up quickly and are forced to stop taking in new ones. The welfare of the animals should *always* come first.

#### **Limited admission v. open admission**

There is a difference between a limited-admission shelter and an open-admission shelter. An open-admission shelter takes every animal it receives, while a limited-admission shelter does not. This has led to some confusion and misunderstanding between animal-welfare advocates, with advocates of no-kill communities pointing out that a limited-admission shelter does not create a true no-kill community. The leading advocates of the no-kill movement say that, based on experience, open-admission shelters can be no-kill by implementing proven and cost-effective life-saving programs.

Critics such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) refer to no-kill shelters as "limited admission shelters" and say that they simply shift the burden to nearby traditional shelters. They also contend that owners who are turned away may abandon or harm the unwanted animals. No-Kill advocates counter that open admission shelters can also lead to abandonment because people may turn their animals loose rather than give them up to a shelter where they would very likely be killed. In addition, No-Kill advocates point out that Ithaca, NY, Charlottesville, VA, and Reno, NV, all have open-admission No Kill shelters, and say that open-admission No Kill shelters are "not only possible [but are] already happening."

From The Humane Society of the United States:

**"The HSUS strongly advocates for an animal shelter in each community whose doors are open to all homeless and unwanted animals. However, animal shelters, as independent agencies, are under no obligation to follow these recommendations."** *(Emphasis added)*

**"Some shelters are mandated to accept all animals brought to them, and The HSUS believes there must be at least one animal shelter in every community that operates under this philosophy. Ending the euthanasia of homeless animals is a goal that all animal welfare organizations share.**

**But the reality is that shelters, with their limited space and finite resources, cannot achieve this goal without high levels of community support."** *(Emphasis added)*

## **Labeling**

Although proponents of no-kill make the distinction between euthanasia and killing, some still assert that the term "no-kill" is unfair to employees of traditional shelters, such as MBCAW. The term has also caused a divide in the animal welfare community beyond ideological differences as it differentiates between no-kill and "kill" shelters, an accusation that cast a bad light on traditional shelters. Professor of Sociology and Anthropology Arnold Arluke has argued that "The no-kill perspective has damaged the community that long existed among shelter workers, changing how they think and feel about each other. The vast majority of shelter workers suddenly are thought of as cruel; five million deaths each year are seen as avoidable rather than inevitable, as previously thought. The no-kill idea created culpability within the shelter world; open-admissions became the guilty party." Nathan Winograd, generally considered the leader of the no-kill movement, makes no apology for the differentiation, and states that the No-Kill ideology is "A Reason for Hope."

## **Overpopulation and mandatory spay/neuter laws**

One of the statements made often by the local rescue groups is that Bibb County should have a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance for all dogs and cats (except those who hold a state license for breeding) to curb what they believe to be pet overpopulation.

Nathan Winograd of the No Kill Advocacy Center, believes that there is no real pet overpopulation problem and that there are more than enough homes for every dog and cat being killed in shelters every year. He claims that based on data from the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Pet Food Manufacturers Association, and the latest census that "there aren't just enough homes for the dogs and cats being killed in shelters. There are more homes for cats and dogs opening each year than there are cats and dogs even entering shelters." Critics argue that such claims do a disservice to population control efforts by causing some pet owners to refuse spaying and neutering recommendations. They also claim that such calculations do not take into account the hundreds of thousands of animals sold by breeders and pet stores.

Winograd and others in the no-kill movement have consistently opposed such measures, asserting that mandatory legislation is ineffective and counterproductive. They feel that better results are achieved by collaboratively working with legitimate breeders and providing low-cost spay/neuter options to low-income people.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) conducted a study of mandatory spay/neuter laws and concluded that there is no "credible evidence" that such laws work to reduce euthanasia in animal shelters. There is a widespread consensus against the enactment of mandatory spay/neuter laws among national animal-welfare organizations including the ASPCA, the No Kill Advocacy Center, Alley Cat Allies, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the American College of Theriogenologists and the Society for Theriogenology, and the Anti-Cruelty Society. Best Friends Animal Society and American Humane Association also are against mandatory spay/neuter laws. Critics of mandatory spay/neuter point to the fact that in Los Angeles, shelter killing and intake have dramatically increased after the passage of a mandatory spay/neuter law due to increased owner surrenders and pet seizures by animal control authorities.

## **Becoming No Kill- Community Support**

Michael Mountain, co-founder of Best Friends Animal Society, wrote:

“First, a community needs to focus on effective spay/neuter, adoption, foster and humane education programs.

The time is coming for humane organizations to remove themselves altogether from the business of having to kill the unwanted animals of irresponsible citizens.

People who simply want to do good for the animals should not be required to take on the job of killing them. This terrible burden is unfair to kind volunteers everywhere who want to nurture life.

The sad work of putting down homeless animals may still have to be one of the jobs of a city animal control department.”

Ed Boks, the former director of New York City Animal Care & Control and Maricopa County Animal Care & Control Services, said it best:

“But to truly become a no-kill community requires every local humane society, animal welfare, rescue and no-kill organization to marshal their resources to assist the one organization where the killing occurs.

Our challenge is not to just participate in, or even coordinate, a community-based no-kill initiative. Those of us in animal control should take the lead! Animal control is where the killing occurs. Who really wants to end it more than we do? Our organizations provide the only real measure against which all the humane societies, animal welfare, no-kill and rescue organizations can even begin to determine their effectiveness. I humbly submit that before any donor or grantor gives \$1 to any local humane/animal welfare organization, they should investigate **what that organization does to reduce the killing in our animal control shelters.** (*Emphasis added.*)

As community leaders, we must rise above the rhetoric of “us versus them.” All local organizations must roll up their sleeves and apply their resources where they will make a difference. Albert Einstein defined insanity as doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results. I believe no-kill is an achievable goal. But it won’t occur if our animal control and animal welfare organizations continue to do business as usual.”

Becoming a no kill community is not an easy task and cannot happen overnight. It cannot be done without the support and assistance from the Board of Commissioners as well as all the county animal welfare/rescue organizations, volunteers and the people who love animals.

## **A Sampling of Shelters**

Collinsville and Jenks, Oklahoma (pop. 22,800+) operate no-kill shelters, but routinely send unwanted animals to Tulsa for euthanasia. According to Jenks operations superintendent Gary Head, the city "wants nothing to do with killing dogs....It keeps us low-key and out of the public's eye. We don't have a bad

reputation here." Tulsa only charges \$1 per animal for euthanasia and accepts about 4000 animals per year from surrounding communities for euthanasia.

In 2008, the Humane Society of Tacoma and Pierce County, in Tacoma, Washington (pop. approx. 808,000) backed away from its no-kill commitment, acknowledging the difficulties encountered in trying to keep animals alive. In announcing their decision, the shelter president stated "that because we are an open shelter that will accept every animal that comes to us, regardless of its medical or behavior problems, true 'no-kill' status will never be a reality." The shelter has now switched from no-kill to "Counting Down to Zero", a coordinated effort to reduce euthanasia.

The Delaware County, Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) announced in July 2010 it would convert to a no-kill shelter, but that animal control was not compatible with its mission or commitment to becoming a "no-kill" organization because it could not achieve no-kill status unless it refused to perform the basic animal control function of accepting stray animals. In the announcement, the SPCA stated they would discontinue taking stray animals by July 30, 2011 in order to euthanize fewer animals — thereby putting the ball of animal control squarely in the court of each of the county's 49 municipalities (pop 559,000+).

In 2007, Jacksonville/Duval County, Florida (pop. 870,000+) announced it would become a no-kill community by 2014. A county-wide coalition was formed which included Animal Care and Protective Services, Jacksonville Humane Society, First Coast No More Homeless Pets, Best Friends Animal Society, pet placement partners, volunteers, the Friends of Jacksonville Animals, and many others. In addition, grants totally more than \$500,000 helped to defray costs of spaying/neutering pets. In a recent newspaper article, the community on target to achieve no-kill status with no adoptable animals being put down in 2014, if not earlier, animal rescue officials said.

On March 28, 2012, the Central California SPCA notified Fresno City and Fresno County (pop. approx. 943,000) that they were canceling their contracts for animal control, effective October 1, 2012. The main reason cited by the SPCA for canceling the contract they had held for over 50 years, is that they want to focus more on low-cost spaying and neutering, education and pet adoption -- its traditional mission. In addition, they stated "no healthy adoptable animals will be euthanized" under their new operation. While providing animal control services, the CCSPCA took in 40,000 animals last year; 71% were euthanized.

One of the most recent communities to watch is Manatee County, Florida (pop. 327,000+). In October 2011 the Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution expressing their desire to make the county "a no kill community." The resolution does not indicate a time frame in which this is to be accomplished.

***Conclusion: The Board of Commissioners sets policy for the county. If they wish to pursue a "low-kill" or "no-kill" municipal shelter, the county must define and establish the parameters at which the department will operate. In addition, the county MUST take the lead role in establishing and nurturing the community and its resources to make this happen. This includes involving every rescue and animal welfare group in the county, providing additional funding as needed, pursuing low/no cost spay/neuter surgeries for the residents, aggressive adoption programs and community education. Everyone must also understand this is a "process" and takes time to achieve.***

## Resources

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2. Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, Maddie's® Shelter Medicine Program <http://www.sheltermedicine.vet.cornell.edu/shelter/>
3. UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Information Sheets <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets>
4. Asilomar Accords. <http://www.asilomaraccords.org/>
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6. How to Tell if a Cat or Dog may Need Veterinary Care: [http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/mar\\_apr\\_1996/how-to-tell-if-a-dog-or-cat.pdf](http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/mar_apr_1996/how-to-tell-if-a-dog-or-cat.pdf)
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10. Purina Body Condition Scoring for Dogs at <http://purina.com/dogs/health/BodyCondition.aspx>
11. How to Determine a Cat's or Dog's Age at [http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may\\_jun\\_1996/how\\_to\\_determine\\_age.html](http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may_jun_1996/how_to_determine_age.html)
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14. Lord LK et al. In vitro sensitivity of commercial scanners to microchips of various frequencies. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 2008; 233:1723-1728.
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16. ASPCA. Standard operating procedures: creating, implementing, evaluating and revising SOPs. <http://www.aspapro.org/creating-sops.php>
17. Determining Kennel Staffing Needs. National Animal Control Association. <http://www.nacanet.org/kennelstaffing.html>
18. The Shelter Pet Project (Ad Council campaign to promote adoptions). <http://theshelterpetproject.org/>
19. Linda Case and George Fahey. Nutritional Challenges for Shelter Animals. In, *Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff*, ed. by Miller and Zawistowski. Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2004.
20. ASPCA. Food, Glorious Food. <http://www.aspapro.org/saving-lives/enrichment-for-shelter-dogs/food-glorious-food.html>
21. Richmond SPCA pet retention programs, <http://www.richmondspca.org/Page.aspx?pid=270> .
22. Successful coalitions, [http://www.maddiesfund.org/Resource\\_Library/Building\\_a\\_Successful\\_Coalition.html](http://www.maddiesfund.org/Resource_Library/Building_a_Successful_Coalition.html)
23. Meet Your Match. [www.aspca.org/adoption/meet-your-match](http://www.aspca.org/adoption/meet-your-match)
24. Operational Guide for Animal Care and Control Agencies: Euthanasia by Injection. American Humane Association. Available for purchase at <http://www.americanhumane.org>
25. The HSUS Euthanasia Training Manual. Available for purchase at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and

26. HSUS Policy on Euthanasia.  
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<http://jacksonville.com/news/metro/2012-09-26/story/jacksonville-pushing-ahead-no-kill-goal-animal-shelter#ixzz284TNK1np>
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## **Additional Documents**

## **Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare**

### **Intake Protocol**

With few exceptions, the following is the procedure for the intake of dogs and cats, to be documented on a Physical Exam Form (pink for female animals, blue for male animals). All processes are to be recorded in Chameleon under "medical".

1. All animals scanned for microchip identification (staff also calls to obtain owner information and contact).
2. Insure any "tag" information is documented and given to staff to call
3. Weigh the animal.
4. Take animal's temperature.
5. Overall general examination, noting any conditions/abnormalities, etc. of ears, eyes, nose, limbs, skin, abdomen, genitalia, feet, coat, teeth/gums.
6. Cats: Draw blood and do a SNAP (Feline Triple); if positive, do not vaccinate.
7. Draw blood and do a SNAP test for HW. Note: A heartworm test is not required for dogs under 5 months of age.
8. Puppies: Do a SNAP Parvo test on all puppies under the age of 6 months. If positive, do not vaccinate; notify supervisor immediately.
9. Vaccinate with proper vaccine. See exceptions below.
  - Dogs: Modified live DA2PP or DHPP and modified live intranasal Bordetella.
  - Cats: FVRCP.
  - Adult dogs and cats should be vaccinated once at intake. A second vaccination 2-4 weeks later may be beneficial, if poor health prevented an optimal response to the vaccine given on intake.
  - Puppies and kittens 4 weeks of age or older should be revaccinated every 2 weeks until 18-20 weeks of age, if still housed in the shelter.
  - Bite Case animals are not vaccinated during quarantine.
10. Give Capstar or other flea treatment by weight (puppies and kittens 4 weeks of age and older, and 2 pounds of body weight or greater).
11. Dose with Heartworm preventative (Iverhart Max) if SNAP test is negative.
12. General worming using pyrantel and/or other medications as necessary per fecal floatation results. (Do not give pyrantel if using Iverhart Max, as pyrantel is in the HW preventative.)
13. Assess general temperament/behavioral issues and note on paperwork and kennel card.
14. Take photo of animal; upload into Chameleon.
15. Put on ID collar.
16. Print kennel/cage ID card.
17. Note re-vaccination (14 days), re-worming (14 days) and HW preventative (30 days) dates on kennel card; Physical Exam form and in Chameleon.
18. Place in appropriate housing (kennel run/cage).
19. Intake technicians each initial and date paperwork.

## **Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare**

Ongoing:

- Check animals daily and make any notations on kennel card and animal's file. Notify supervisor, if needed.
- If lethargic, severe diarrhea or other symptoms of illness appear, do Parvo SNAP test and/or fecal; notify supervisor.
- Re-vaccinate, HW preventative and re-worm per schedule.

### **Exceptions to vaccination protocol in Number 9 above:**

#### **Special Protocol for nursing mothers and litters of puppies/kittens:**

All instructions listed above should be followed; however, the puppies/kittens in the litter should be vaccinated according to the criteria listed below.

Try to determine the age of the litter. The dentition can help with this and practice will help develop this skill. Puppies that are 3 weeks or less generally still have the "fronds" at the edge of their tongue used for nursing. These regress about 3-4 weeks of age (usually when weaning begins).

**All puppies over the age of 2 weeks and mothers** should receive intranasal administration of the **Bordatella** vaccine upon entering the shelter. Puppies initially vaccinated prior to 6 weeks of age should be revaccinate when the puppy is at least 6 weeks old but no sooner than two weeks after the previous vaccination.

#### **Mothers with litters less than 4 weeks of age:**

Vaccinate the MOTHER ONLY as delineated in number 9 above. Litters can then begin their vaccines 2 weeks later. Passive immunity will be transferred through the mother's milk for the first 2-3 weeks.

#### **Mothers with litters more than 4 weeks of age:**

Vaccinate the MOTHER AND THE LITTER as delineated in number 9 above. Boosters should be given to mom and litter 2 weeks later.

#### **Litters admitted without their mother:**

Vaccinate immediately regardless of age with the DHPP/DA2PP or FVRCP. Re-vaccinate every 2 weeks until they are 16 weeks. [Note: if not weaned, consider rescue/foster or euthanasia. If fostering is available, vaccinate.]

# Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare

## Physical Exam Form

Animal# \_\_\_\_\_ Dog / Cat Date Processed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male / Female S/N (with proof) Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Temp \_\_\_\_\_ Color(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Markings \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Collar Type/Color \_\_\_\_\_ Tags \_\_\_\_\_

Cats: SNAP FeLV / Heartworm / FIV Negative / Positive Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dogs: SNAP HW Neg / Pos 1 dot/2 dots Microfilaria- Yes / None Seen Date \_\_\_\_\_

Puppies: SNAP Parvo Neg / Pos Single Litter Animal # Tested \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Microchip# \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccine Labels \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Fecal \_\_\_\_\_ De-worming drug/dose \_\_\_\_\_

Ears \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Nose \_\_\_\_\_ Limbs \_\_\_\_\_

Skin Condition \_\_\_\_\_ Abdomen \_\_\_\_\_ Genitalia \_\_\_\_\_

Feet \_\_\_\_\_ Coat \_\_\_\_\_ Teeth/Gums \_\_\_\_\_

Flea Treatment \_\_\_\_\_ HW Prev. \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Kennel Card Printed \_\_\_\_\_ ID Neck Band \_\_\_\_\_ Examiner(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Input into Computer by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Re-vaccination Due Date:* \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Re-worm Due Date:* \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

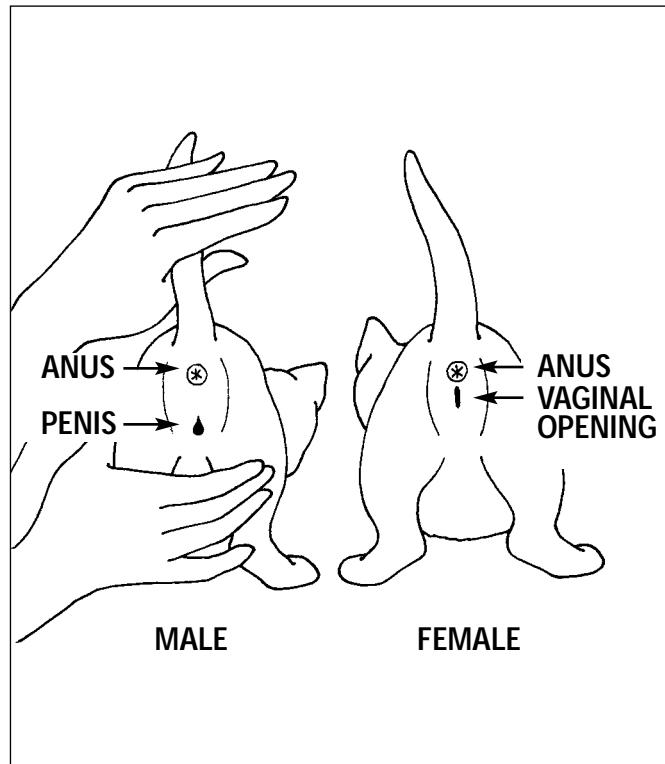
*HW Prev. Due Date:* \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# How to Determine a Cat's Sex

**I**t's not always easy to figure out if a kitten or cat is a boy or girl. In kittens, unlike in puppies, no testicles are plainly visible until the animals reach 6-10 weeks of age. In adult cats, neutered males can be easily confused with females. The diagrams below can help.

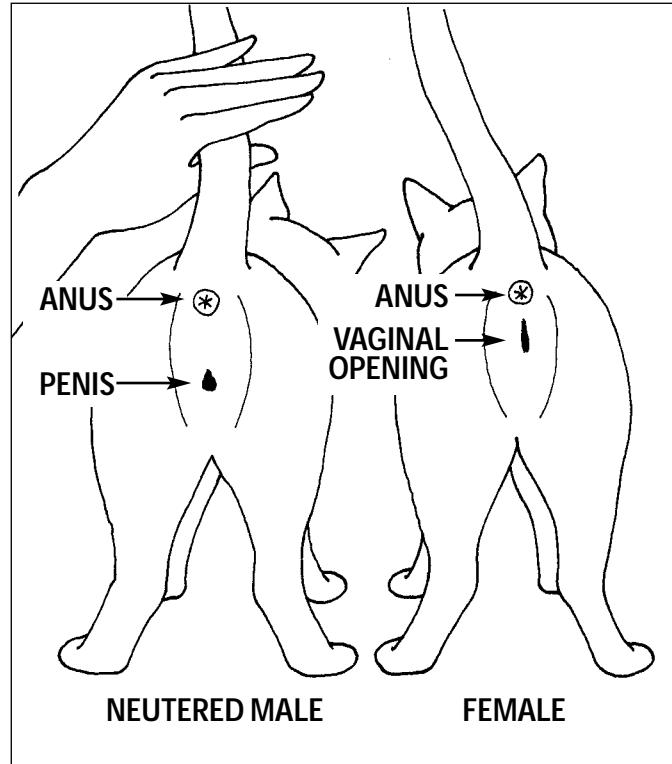
In small kittens, gently lift the tail and look at the spacing between the anus and the sexual organ.

- The kitten is a male if the spacing between the anus and the penis is relatively wide (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch apart). The penis is usually hidden, but the area around it will look more like a hole than a slit.
- The kitten is a female if the anus and the vaginal opening are close together—almost adjacent to each other. The vaginal opening looks more like a slit than a round hole.



Because they are missing their testicles, adult neutered male cats don't look much different from adult female cats. Gently lift the tail and look at the spacing between the anus and the sexual organ.

- The cat is a neutered male if the spacing between the anus and the penis is relatively wide (more than one inch apart).
- The cat is a female if the anus and the vaginal opening are relatively close together (less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch apart).



Illustrations by Sascie Duckworth

Dog's Name:

**ID#**

# CANINE ENRICHMENT CHRONICLE

# Weekly Health Sheet

A# \_\_\_\_\_ Kennel/Cage \_\_\_\_\_

	Eating	Drinking	Feces	Urine	Meds	Issues
<b>Monday</b> By: _____						
<b>Tuesday</b> By: _____						
<b>Wednesday</b> By: _____						
<b>Thursday</b> By: _____						
<b>Friday</b> By: _____						
<b>Saturday</b> By: _____						
<b>Sunday</b> By: _____						



# OWNER SURRENDER: DOG

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Dog's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Intake # A \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Spayed/Neutered? Yes No Microchipped? Yes No # \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you surrendering this dog? (Please provide as much information as you can.)

---

---

---

How long have you owned the dog? \_\_\_\_\_ How many homes has the dog had? \_\_\_\_\_

Who did you get the dog from? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the dog scratched or bitten a person in the last ten (10) days? Yes No

If yes, who was bitten: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of bite: \_\_\_\_\_ In what city? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the dog ever: Bitten Scratched Lunged or attacked None of these

If yes, did a bite break the skin? Yes No Was Animal Control involved? Yes No

Please explain the circumstances: \_\_\_\_\_

The dog's veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_ City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the dog current on vaccinations? Yes No

Please list any past or present injuries, treatments or other medical history:

---

Circle all of the following that describe the dog:

Very active Couch potato Barks a lot Fearful Playful Friendly  
Fence jumper (fence height: \_\_\_\_\_ ft) Wary of newcomers Affectionate Quiet  
Independent Protective Always at your side Indoor dog Outdoor dog  
Nervous House-trained Crate-trained Likes men Likes women  
Worked livestock Used for hunting Separation anxiety Digger

Has the dog lived with children? Yes No If so, what ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend your dog live with children in the future? Yes No

Has the dog lived with other dogs? Yes No

Would you recommend your dog live with other dogs in the future? Yes No

Has the dog lived with dogs? Yes No

Would you recommend your dog live with dogs in the future? Yes No

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO THE OTHER SIDE >>>**

What are the dog's favorite activities or objects? \_\_\_\_\_

What does the dog dislike or fear? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the dog kept during the day? \_\_\_\_\_

Where does the dog sleep at night? \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of food do you feed your dog? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the dog been on Heartworm Preventative? Yes No Last dose: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else a future owner should know about this dog?

My signature below certifies that I am the owner of, or have the authority to surrender to the Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare, the animal described above. I hereby relinquish all rights of ownership. I also authorize the release of any veterinary records regarding the animal. I certify that to the best of my knowledge, I have disclosed all information about the animal concerning health, behavior, history and anything else that may affect the safe placement of the animal in a new home, and that all statements made above are true and correct.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Staff use only:

Owner ID: P

Staff initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Notes:



# OWNER SURRENDER: CAT

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cat's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Intake # A \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Spayed/Neutered? Yes No Declawed? Front Back Both Not declawed

Microchipped? Yes If yes, # \_\_\_\_\_ No

Why are you surrendering this cat? (Please provide as much information as you can.)

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How long have you owned the cat? \_\_\_\_\_ How many homes has the cat had? \_\_\_\_\_

Who did you get the cat from? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the cat scratched or bitten a person in the last ten (10) days? Yes No

If yes, who was bitten: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of bite: \_\_\_\_\_ In what city? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the cat ever: Bitten Scratched Lunged or attacked None of these

If yes, did a bite break the skin? Yes No Was Animal Control involved? Yes No

Please explain the circumstances: \_\_\_\_\_

The cat's veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_ City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the cat current on vaccinations? Yes No

Please list any past or present injuries, treatments or other medical history:

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Check all of the following that describe the cat:

Very active	Couch potato	Talkative	Quiet	Playful	Friendly
Hunts birds	Shy	Likes to be touched	Affectionate	Fearful	
Independent	Scaredy cat	Good mouser	Indoor cat	Outdoor cat	
Nervous	Litter box-trained	Easy to pick up	Likes men	Likes women	

Has the cat lived with children? Yes No If so, what ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend your cat live with children in the future? Yes No

Has the cat lived with other cats? Yes No

Would you recommend your cat live with other cats in the future? Yes No

Has the cat lived with dogs? Yes No

Would you recommend your cat live with dogs in the future? Yes No

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO THE OTHER SIDE >>>**

What are the cat's favorite activities or objects? \_\_\_\_\_

What does the cat dislike or fear? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the cat kept during the day? \_\_\_\_\_

Where does the cat sleep at night? \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of food do you feed your cat? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else a future owner should know about this cat?

My signature below certifies that I am the owner of, or have the authority to surrender to the Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare, the animal described above. I hereby relinquish all rights of ownership. I also authorize the release of any veterinary records regarding the animal. I certify that to the best of my knowledge, I have disclosed all information about the animal concerning health, behavior, history and anything else that may affect the safe placement of the animal in a new home, and that all statements made above are true and correct.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Staff use only:

Owner ID: P\_\_\_\_\_

Staff initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Notes:



## MACON-BIBB COUNTY ANIMAL WELFARE

### Owner Release

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Animal ID# A\_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner ID:	CDL#	Sex:	Hair:
Eyes:	Height:	Weight:	DOB:

### RELINQUISHMENT OF ANIMAL AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY

I am the owner, or owner's agent, of the animal described on this form. To the best of my knowledge, this animal **HAS / HAS NOT** (circle one) bitten anyone in the past 10 days. I relinquish ownership of this animal and request that it be accepted by Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare. **I understand that the Department reserves the right to determine the animal's disposition, which may include euthanasia or adoption. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

I release Macon-Bibb County Animal Welfare and the Bibb County Board of Commissioners, their officers, employees, agents, and volunteers, from any and all claims, liabilities, expenses, or judgments, arising from the acceptance, destruction and/or other disposition of this animal. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Reason(s) for relinquishment: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

## Euthanasia Log

**Fatal Plus Bottle #** \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_

## Ketaset / Acepromazine Daily Usage Log

10 cc Ketaset + 1 cc Acepromazine per bottle

Completed daily, if used

# Xylazine Daily Usage Log

50 cc per bottle

Completed daily, if used

## Fatal Plus Master Log

250 cc per bottle

## Ketaset / Acepromazine Master Log

10 cc Ketaset + 1 cc Acepromazine per bottle

## Xylazine Master Log

50 cc per bottle

## IV. Annual Animal Statistics & Live Release Rate Formulas

### 1. Annual Animal Statistics Table

		Dog	Cat	Total
A	BEGINNING SHELTER COUNT (date)			
	INTAKE (Live Dogs & Cats Only)			
B	From the Public			
C	Incoming Transfers from Organizations within Community/Coalition			
D	Incoming Transfers from Organizations outside Community/Coalition			
E	From Owners/Guardians Requesting Euthanasia			
F	Total Intake [B + C + D + E]			
G	Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia (Unhealthy & Untreatable Only)			
H	ADJUSTED TOTAL INTAKE [F minus G]			
I	ADOPTIONS			
J	OUTGOING TRANSFERS to Organizations within Community/Coalition			
K	OUTGOING TRANSFERS to Organizations outside Community/Coalition			
L	RETURN TO OWNER/GUARDIAN			
	DOGS & CATS EUTHANIZED			
M	Healthy (Includes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia)			
N	Treatable – Rehabilitatable (Includes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia)			
O	Treatable – Manageable (Includes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia)			
P	Unhealthy & Untreatable (Includes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia)			
Q	Total Euthanasia [M + N + O + P]			
R	Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia (Unhealthy & Untreatable Only)			
S	ADJUSTED TOTAL EUTHANASIA [Q minus R]			
T	SUBTOTAL OUTCOMES [I + J + K + L + S] Excludes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia (Unhealthy & Untreatable Only)			
U	DIED OR LOST IN SHELTER/CARE			
V	TOTAL OUTCOMES [T + U] Excludes Owner/Guardian Requested Euthanasia (Unhealthy & Untreatable Only)			
W	ENDING SHELTER COUNT (date)			

To check the accuracy of the shelter data you've compiled, the Beginning Shelter Count (A) plus the Adjusted Total Intake (H) should equal the Total Outcomes (V) plus the Ending Shelter Count (W):  $A + H = V + W$